The Churches and the Development Debate: the promise of a fourth generation approach

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Dissertation presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Stellenbosch

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December 2000

Declaration

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is my own orignal work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

SUMMARY

The aim of this study was to think anew about the involvement of the Christian churches in strategic development. The author undertook such an exercise in an abstract and general manner, not by undertaking specific case studies, but by applying various development and social sciences debates to come to a new understanding of the churches' meaningful participation in the broad area of development.

The notion of the churches as 'idea' and 'value' institutions in the field of development was particularly developed. The study found its critical point of departure in the ecumenical theological debate on development over the last four decades. The first three chapters show how the charity-development juxtaposition in ecumenical development discourse problematises and frames the historical and actual participation of the churches in development. It is indicated that this discourse poses a critical theoretical and ideological challenge not only to the churches' socio-economic involvement through charity, but also to the mainstream secular development enterprise. It is concluded through the pragmatic debate in the broader ecumenical development discourse that an enduring divide exists between progressive theoretical thinking on the churches' participation in development and the actual development practices of the churches. It is concluded, akin to an historical charity involvement, that the churches have, generally speaking, been over-investing in project approaches to development at the cost of modes of engagement which highlight an idea- and value-centred development praxis.

In chapters four to seven the argument is further developed through the conceptual framework of third and fourth generation development strategies. Through ideas on this conceptual framework, which were first formulated by David Korten in NGO and people-centred development debates, but which have also been extended to broader 'alternative' development and social sciences debates within the analytic framework of this study, the idea- and value-centred perspective in this study was further worked out and applied to the churches. It is concluded that the conceptual framework of third generation development strategies poses an appropriate (public) challenge to the churches to become involved in the policy-making, managerial and organisational processes of development.

In contrast to a 'politics of limited space' which the third generation mode presents to the churches, it is maintained that the 'unlimited political space' of the fourth generation mode of development involvement is more appropriate to the churches. It is argued that the churches could most effectively and meaningfully participate in the new transnational social movement 'value' and 'idea' politics (e.g. peace, human rights, women, environment, democracy, people-centred development) prioritised in the fourth generation strategic perspective. This argument is further worked out in the final chapter through the proposal of four beacons of action that may guide the churches to become meaningful participants in fourth (and third) generation strategic development action, namely (i) the new social movements, (ii) the new communication solidarities, (iii) alternative development policy, and (iv) 'soft culture'.

OPSOMMING

Die doel van die studie was om opnuut te dink oor die strategiese betrokkenheid van die kerke in ontwikkeling. Die skrywer het sodanige oefening op 'n abstrakte en algemene wyse onderneem deur geen spesifieke gevalle studies te doen nie, maar deur verskeie ontwikkelings- en sosiaal wetenskaplike debatte toe te pas om tot 'n nuwe verstaan van die kerke se betekenisvolle deelname in die breë veld van ontwikkeling te kom.

Die konsep van die kerke as 'idee' en 'waarde' instellings in die veld van ontwikkeling is spesifiek ontwikkel. Die studie het die ekumeniese teologiese debat oor ontwikkeling van die laaste vier dekades as kritiese vertrekpunt geneem. In die eerste drie hoofstukke word aangetoon hoe die barmhartigheid-ontwikkeling jukstaposisie in die ekumeniese ontwikkelingsdiskoers die historiese en teenswoordige deelname van die kerke in ontwikkeling problematiseer en bepaal. Daar word aangedui hoe hierdie diskoers nie slegs 'n kritiese teoretiese en ideologiese uitdaging aan die kerke se sosio-ekonomiese betrokkenheid deur middel van barmhartigheidswerk bied nie, maar ook aan die hoofstroom sekulêre ontwikkelingsonderneming. Aan die hand van die pragmatiese debat in die breër ekumeniese ontwikkelingsdiskoers word die gevolgtrekking gemaak dat daar 'n blywende skeiding bestaan tussen progressiewe teoretiese denke oor die kerke se deelname aan ontwikkeling en die teenswoordige ontwikkelingspraktyke van die kerke. Daar word gekonkludeer dat die kerke op 'n soortgelyke wyse as hulle historiese betrokkenheid deur middel van barmhartigheidswerk in die algemeen oorgeïnvesteer het in projek benaderings tot ontwikkeling ten koste van maniere van betrokkenheid wat 'n idee en waarde gesentreerde ontwikkelingspraktyk beklemtoon.

In hoofstukke vier tot sewe word die argument verder ontwikkel aan die hand van die konseptuele raamwerk van derde en vierde generasie ontwikkelingstrategieë. Aan die hand van idees oor hierdie konseptuele raamwerk, wat eerstens deur David Korten in NRO en mensgesentreerde ontwikkelingsdebatte geformuleer is, maar binne die analitiese raamwerk van hierdie studie ook neerslag vind in wyer 'alternatiewe' ontwikkelings- en sosiaal wetenskaplike debatte, is die idee en waarde gesentreerde perspektief in die studie verder uitgewerk en toegepas op die kerke. Die gevolgtrekking word gemaak dat die konseptuele raamwerk van derde generasie

ontwikkelingstrategieë 'n gepaste (publieke) uitdaging aan die kerke bied om betrokke te raak by die beleidmakende, bestuurs- en organisatoriese prosesse van ontwikkeling.

Teenoor 'n 'politiek van beperkte ruimte' wat die derde generasie wyse van betrokkenheid vir die kerke verteenwoordig, word volgehou dat die 'onbeperkte politieke ruimte' van die vierde generasie wyse van betrokkenheid meer gepas is vir die kerke. Daar word geargumenteer dat die kerke op 'n mees effektiewe en betekenisvolle wyse sou kon deelneem aan die 'waarde' en 'idee' politiek (bv. vrede, mense regte, vroue, omgewing, demokrasie, mensgesentreede ontwikkeling) wat in die vierde generasie strategiese perspektief voorrang geniet. Hierdie argument word verder uitgewerk in die finale hoofstuk deur die voorstel van vier bakens van aksie wat as rigtingwyser kan dien vir die kerke se voorgenome betekenisvolle deelname in vierde (en derde) generasie strategiese ontwikkelingsaksie, naamlik (i) die nuwe sosiale bewegings, (ii) die nuwe kommunikasie solidariteite, (iii) alternatiewe ontwikkelingsbeleid en (iv) 'sagte kultuur'.

Acknowledgement of financial support

Financial assistance provided by the National Research Foundation: Division for Social Sciences and Humanities (DSSH) and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) for this research is hereby acknowledged. Opinions expressed and conclusions reached cannot necessarily be attributed to the National Research Foundation or the German Academic Exchange Service.

PREFACE

It was in 1992, a year after my formal theological studies at the University of Stellenbosch, that I decided to embark on this doctoral study. A study for which I had much enthusiasm, yet for which I was ill prepared through my formal academic studies, the topic was initially vaguely formulated as something that would deal with the question of how the churches could contribute to the alleviation of poverty. In a South African society approaching its final years of formal apartheid rule, this seemed to be a very appropriate topic. The question of reconstruction increasingly began to draw the attention of those in theological and church circles in the country.

What followed were hard but enriching years. After an initial period at Stellenbosch in which I was trying to find my feet, I had the privilege to continue my studies first of all at the University of Heidelberg in Germany and later at the Institute of Social Studies (ISS) in The Hague, The Netherlands. At the latter institution, financial assistance by the Ökumenisches Studienwerk at Bochum, Germany, and the Stichting Studiefonds voor Zuidafrikaanse Studenten in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, made it possible for me to enroll for the MA degree in the Politics of Alternative Development Strategies (PADS). The studies for the PADS degree and particularly the ideas of Peter Waterman, a lecturer at the ISS, indeed made a lasting impression on my thinking and are clearly evident in the ideas which I have developed in this study.

A number of people have contributed to the final completion of this study and must be thanked. Having returned to South Africa at the end of 1996, it was in the next three and a half years that my supervisor, Prof. Johann Kinghorn helped me to restructure my thinking and to ultimately give shape to what has in the end become a much richer and comprehensive product than the one initially envisaged.

On a personal and emotive level a number of persons have inspired and kept faith in me to complete the study, close family and friends. In difficult times it has been my first academic teachers at Stellenbosch, Johann Cook, Paul Kruger and Sakkie Cornelius who always rendered a supportive ear and encouraged me. The same applies to my mother Yvonne and Karel August at the Theological Seminary of the University of Stellenbosch.

The names of Maryse Veldtman and Wilhelm du Plessis also deserve special mention. Both of them have contributed substantially to the readability and general grammatical improvement of the text.

I am indebted to my wife Karen more than to anyone else. She has carried the burden of this study with me for the last seven years and has made big sacrifices. In this period she also gave birth to our first-born, Clara-Mari. I am hopeful that the completion of this study will mark the start of better times for the three of us.

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INTRODUCTION

> Any development work of the churches must be seen in the theological and organizational setting of the ecumenical movement, even when not directly connected with that movement. The ecumenical movement has opened new dimensions of awareness to the fundamental issues of the developing world. It has brought into the discussion of Christian responsibility people with radically different perspectives. It has thrown social issues into a new context and given inescapable immediacy and urgency to the plight of the poorer nations. It has brought vitality, and also confusion into the theological and philosophical debates on a Christian understanding of man, society and history. It has also required the forging of new conceptions of the Church and churches' participation in society. (Richard Dickinson 1968: 47)

The contemporary theological and ecclesiastical concern with the issue of development leads us back to what can be called the ecumenical theological debate on development for more than one reason. We may begin by putting this statement in the following historical perspective:

Firstly, the theological and ecclesiastical concern with development originated within the very realm of what is popularly referred to in Christian theological and church circles as the 'ecumenical movement'. As indicated in ecumenical literature itself, it is a concern and debate which especially took off after the World Council of Churches' (WCC's) World Conference on Church and Society at Geneva in 1966[1]. Subsequently, this event marked the beginning of a strikingly fruitful period of

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[1]Whereas development as an officially launched nation-state project is generally recognised to have started after World War II - which is well indicated by the United Nations' partitioning of this official period into a succession of 'development decades' (see for instance how this historical determination is indicated in essays by Wolfgang Sachs (1993: 1-5; 1993a: 102-115) and Gustavo Esteva (1993: 6-25) in *The Development Dictionary*) - it is commonly recognised by writers from the ecumenical movement that the church and theological sector only seriously started to engage itself with the issue of development after the above-mentioned conference at Geneva (see e.g. Dickinson 1991: 269; Itty 1974: 6-7; 1967: 352). This recognition of the churches'/ecumenical movement's relative late entry to the worldwide concern for development (when compared with development's earlier beginnings as an official nation-state project of world-wide proportions) is for instance well captured by Ans van der Bent, in her book on vital ecumenical concerns:

> Hardly any theme and concern has been so inadequately handled in official ecumenical statements during the period 1948-1965 than that of economic and integral development. A naïve and romantic conviction prevailed that once poor peoples in the Third World obtain a minimum of technology and are profiting from "the benefits of more-machine-production", the process of development will move in the right direction and the living standards of a large part of the population will be raised... Only in 1966 did the Geneva World Conference on Church and Society make a serious attempt on the part of the WCC to understand the revolutionary realities which shape the modern world. It made the issue of world economic development a major concern of the churches and stressed that large contributions from the rich nations are needed and deep changes in world economic and political structures are required if global economic growth is to be achieved. (1986: 282-283)

reflections and writings on the theme of development within the theological and organisational setting of the WCC, but also other related branches of the ecumenical movement, such as in southeast Asia in particular[2]. Making such an observation, it is necessary to add here that contributions from other representations of Christian theology and the churches only followed at a relatively later stage[3].

Secondly, the ecumenical movement, through the formations referred to above, presents us with the bulk of theological literature on the theme of development, at least up to a particular point in time[4]. Following from the later entry of other groups into the development debate, we encounter a longer, substantial period of serious grappling with the issue of development only in the case of the above-mentioned movement. What is referred to here, is a confined and clearly demarcated core of literature which first of all excelled in the theological and organisational setting of the WCC over the last three to four decades and which in actual fact only encompasses a relatively small group of writers leading the ecumenical debate on development. It is a debate that can be traced back to articles published in *The Ecumenical Review* as far

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[2] In the construction of the ecumenical theological debate in the first three chapters of this study, writings and perspectives from the latter branch will accordingly constitute an important complement to those coming from the direct circle of the WCC (see also the next paragraph in the main discussion above for the names of those southeast Asian journals which constitute part of our frame of reference). Having said this, it will be necessary to acknowledge here, the prominent place taken by scholars from a southeast Asian descent in the conceptualisation over the years of the official WCC perspective on development itself - persons such as Samuel Parmar, C. I. Itty, C. T. Kurien, M. M. Thomas and Gnana Robinson.

[3] (1) It is in fact only in the 1980s that more serious reflections on the specific theme of development within what may broadly be defined as the evangelical movement in Christianity are encountered. Here the two publications especially worth mentioning are a series of conference and consultation papers published respectively in Sider, R J (ed.) 1981. *Evangelicals and Development: Toward a Theology of Social Change*. Exeter: The Paternoster Press and Samuel, V and Sudgen, C (eds.) 1987. *The Church in Response to Human Need*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. See particularly in these publications the respective introductory contributions by Ronald Sider (1981: 9-12) and Vinay Samuel and Chris Sugden (1987: viii-xii) for overviews of the unfolding of a development concern in evangelical circles.

(2) Taking the present author's own particular South African theological and church context as a further case in point, it can be noted that a more explicit reflection on the theme of development followed at an even later stage. The first notable initiative here came from a group of researchers (theologians and non-theologians) predominantly from Afrikaner and Dutch Reformed descent who under the leadership of J. J. Kritzinger engaged in an extensive research project on the role of religion in development from 1987-1990. While it can be noted that the latter project resulted in a substantial number of articles published on the subject of religion/church and development in the years from 1989-1991 (see Kritzinger 1991: 10-11), it has, however, been a series of studies and reports emanating from the conferences on "Church and Development" held annually by the Ecumenical Foundation of South Africa (EFSA) Institute from 1992-1997 which have come to present researchers with the bulk of literature on the theme of religion/church and development in the South African context. (See in this case the following publications which have up to date been published by the EFSA Institute: *Church and Development: An Interdisciplinary Approach* (1992); *Transition and Transformation: A Challenge to the Church* (1994); *The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP): The Role of the Church, Civil Society and NGOs* (1995).)

[4] See the previous footnote again.

back as 1967[5], but also to a series of monographs, collective studies emanating from conferences and consultations on development and essays in larger works[6]. With regard to the observation of other related ecumenical branches or settings over a similar period, this debate also finds a significant extension in southeast Asian journals such as *Religion and Society* and *Bangalore Theological Forum*[7], and more recently *Al-Mushir* and *East Asian Pastoral Review*[8].

Having stated the historical perspective, there may, however, also be a more explicit social theological reason for postulating the ecumenical debate on development as point of orientation. The reason for this is that this debate, from the point of view of a particular ecumenical self-awareness and self-appreciation, anticipates the progressive and innovative stream of thought on development within the broad theological-ecclesiastical sector. As discussed in greater detail in especially chapter two of this study, within the ecumenical theological debate on development one encounters what can be called the 'pretence of a critical challenge' posed both to a traditional theological and church sector and a mainstream secular development discourse. Hence, this debate (more than any other account of the development theme in Christianity) anticipates and spells out a new radical *worldly* engagement[9] by the Christian theological and church sector, a new radical social praxis[10] and comprehensive social language that surpasses the traditional confined engagement and language set by the latter sector's traditional self-containment vis-à-vis the non-

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[5] See especially Vol. 19, No. 4 of *The Ecumenical Review* in which a whole series of articles on development that followed on the 1966 Conference on Church and Society in Geneva, can be found. See for instance the introductory article by C. I. Itty (1967: 249-352).

[6] Ans van der Bent's critical chapter on development in her book, *Vital Ecumenical Concerns* (1986) and Richard Dickinson's entry on development in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement* (1991) constitute the important examples of this third category.

[7] See here again the point made in footnote 2 about the close association of scholars from a southeast Asian descent with the debate on development associated more directly with the WCC. Thus we could recognise amongst the names mentioned in the latter footnote persons such as Samuel Parmar, C. T. Kurien and M. M. Thomas who also figure prominently in these two journals.

[8] These two journals may be added to the list as the perspective on development propagated here in articles articulate the same line of thinking as in the corpus of ecumenical literature already mentioned.

[9] In his two important essays on the theological foundation of the churches' participation in development, Trutz Rendtorff meaningfully comes to state that the development process had to be seen in its entirety as "a new form of Christian unity in the world" (1971: 95; 1969: 210).

[10] In one of his later writings, Richard Dickinson, one of the ecumenical movement's most prominent spokespersons on development over the last three to four decades, writes that for the ecumenical churches, the germane issue in development was not anymore *whether* they should be in solidarity with the poor, but *how* (1983: 71).

ecclesiastical and non-theological world. Accordingly, it is also the radical worldly basis and commitment of that debate that anticipate and spell out a critical disposition by Christian theology and the churches towards the mainstream secular realm, as their entering into the worldly realm and adaptation of new modes of learning and cooperation with other worldly actors enable them to engage in such a critical way.

On the basis of an own ecumenical inclination this study finds its critical point of departure in the above demarcated ecumenical development debate. More specifically, it takes as a central concept the notion of *charity*, which in the ecumenical development debate came to conceptualise a mode of ecclesiastical understanding and involvement that once again problematises the church sector's meaningful engagement with the problems of poverty and socio-economic deprivation. It is indicated how within this debate the notion of charity came to denote a particular *historical* mode of ecclesiastical social engagement and understanding which the ecumenical sector aspired to have surpassed in a later, new (development) era. From this historical point of departure the discussion will then focus on the actual (progressive) contents of the ecumenical theological debate on development. It will analyse the extent in which this debate poses a *critical challenge* to a historical and traditional theological and ecclesiastical social involvement and understanding, but also a challenge to a mainstream secular development discourse.

Besides setting out the above development-charity juxtaposition in the framework of a particular ecumenical historical consciousness, the intention of the discussion is also to show how a development involvement by the churches would once again be problematised in the ecumenical development debate by what has been termed the *pragmatic debate*. In fact, with the discussion of *this* particular debate it will be pointed out how a culmination point is reached in the whole ecumenical development debate, as it is once again brought back to a consideration of the very basics of the theological-ecclesiastical debate on development against the background of the already identified charity-development juxtaposition. It will be argued and illustrated how the pragmatic debate, in a most meaningful and critical way, brings us back to a consideration of the actual *praxis* of the churches that has occurred in the name of development. This includes (i) questions about the actual *contents* of the churches' development work, (ii) questions about whether the churches' involvement in the area

of poverty alleviation could in fact be accounted for as *development*, (iii) questions about whether the development work undertaken by the churches did in fact articulate the radical worldly engagement and progressive development discourse set forth by the ecumenical position, and ultimately (iv) questions about whether the churches' apparent development involvement did in fact reflect something new, more critical and profound than its former engagement with the poor and deprived through the historical mode of charity work.

Following from the above exposition it can be said that this study is primarily concerned with the question of *development strategy*, *development praxis* and the *modes of authentic development engagement* by the Christian churches in particular. It undertakes such an exercise in an abstract and generalising manner by not engaging in specific case studies as such, but by applying particular critical aspects of the ecumenical development debate to reflect on the churches' meaningful participation in development. However, in this study's endeavour to think critically and anew about the churches' participation in development, such an application of the ecumenical development debate only represents a *first* stage. In compliance with its *ecumenical* and *interdisciplinary* intentions[11], this study's aim is *to reflect in a further deepening sense on the participation of the churches in development from the point of view of a broader NGO and related people-centred development debate in contemporary development theory, particularly from what has been conceptualised as the third and fourth generation approaches or strategies in this theoretical framework.*

Pointing out in further discussion how a charity-development juxtaposition *similar* to that in the ecumenical development debate can be traced in a broader NGO development debate, this study proceeds to find a further deepening and innovative perspective which was first formulated in the work of David Korten[12]. A foremost

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[11] Here the notions of ecumenicity and interdisciplinarity closely follow the position in earlier ecumenical development debates which state that a meaningful ecclesiastical and theological understanding and engagement could only come from this sector's *cooperation* and *integration* with the other (non-theological) actors or disciplines in the development field. It asks from theology to take on a supra-ecclesiastical identity, which in fact means taking on a non-identifiable character at a certain moment in the whole process, a position of learning in order to come to a higher level of understanding and theorising (see Rendtorff 1971: 95, 102; 1969: 210, 214-215; see also the discussion in 2.2 of this study).

[12] We find the deepening and innovative perspective more specifically and especially in Korten's, *Getting to the 21st Century: Voluntary Action and the Global Agenda* (1990), which represents the culminating point in his strategic thinking on development.

exponent of an emerging 'people-centred development' theoretical corpus, it is indicated how Korten would himself come to problematise NGO development work in terms of what he identified as first generation strategies of *relief and welfare* activity and second generation strategies of (local) *community development* involvement. From this basic point of departure, it is indicated how, in Korten's case, this identification has come to form part of a particular *stratified* and *historical scheme* which in the NGO development debate not merely reflects the initial line of problematisation (i.e. the problem of a charity-development juxtaposition). It in an innovative way also comes to conceptualise a mode of authentic NGO development activity that goes beyond such an initial problematisation to articulate so-called *third generation* strategies of *sustainable systems development* activity.

In a first round of argumentation this study wants to put forward Korten's framework of three generations of NGO development strategies as also particularly significant for the theological-ecclesiastical development debate. It is argued here, firstly, that Korten's perspective could be taken as representative of a larger NGO debate which, like the ecumenical development debate, has been grappling with the problem of charity. Like churches, it is argued that NGOs belong to a civil society or voluntary sector which traditionally has been trapped in welfare work and which only slowly and painfully has started to negotiate and define its rightful existence as a political and development actor vis-à-vis the state, government and business sectors. Secondly, and directly related to the first argument, it is argued that we could, in the case of Korten's perspective, find an attempt towards the conceptualisation of a mode of strategic development engagement that deliberately aims to surpass first and second generations of relief and project development work (that is, those in which churches have also remained stuck).

In the light of the above-mentioned correspondence this study wants to argue that Korten's formulation of a third generation development strategy in an appropriate and meaningful way challenges a theological and church sector towards a level of theoretical and strategic innovation beyond its past and present understanding of and engagement in development (as this study concludes with regard to a third generation perspective). Consequently, this study wants to propose that the notion of third generation development strategies challenges the churches to adapt to a far more

critical *public* role, to come to the realisation that their current efforts in development through works of charity and community projects remain unrefined and insufficient. In the positive, strategic sense, it proposes that the churches should realise that they might only play a meaningful structural and transformative role in development, if they themselves were to adapt to a third generation mode of engagement through which they would manage to, in one way or another, become part of the *policy-making* processes at various levels of society (micro, meso and macro).

The discussion will then go on to indicate how Korten's perspective underwent a further deepening which introduced the NGO development debate to the concept of a *fourth generation approach* or strategy. Departing from his initial identification of three generations of NGO development strategies[13], it will be pointed out how Korten in a further development of his own thinking, came to regard the third generation strategy or approach as still exposing definite shortcomings in terms of an overall theory and strategy of (global) transformation. For while attending to the critical problem of institutional and policy constraints in development, the third generation strategy did, in Korten's critical assessment, not only require countless interventions in the institutional and policy processes at macro level (similar to that of a second generation strategy at micro and community level), but it also had to do so within a basically hostile political and institutional environment. This necessitated a complementary fourth generation strategy that would be able to go beyond the focused initiatives of a third generation strategy and energise a critical mass of independent, coalescing and decentralised initiatives in support of a *global* social vision for transformation. It points to a strategy or approach, a fourth generation strategy or approach, that ought to make the contemporary *social movements* the primary subjects of its development action and theory:

> Social movements have a special quality. They are driven not by budgets or organizational structures, but rather by ideas, by a vision of a better world. They move on social energy more than on money. The vision mobilizes independent action by countless individuals and organizations across national boundaries, all supporting a

[13] Also mentioned by himself in the work indicated in footnote 12, Korten's original confinement to a third generation perspective is clearly evident from an article by him that dates back to 1987 (thus only three years before the work mentioned in footnote 12 in which the fourth generation perspective has been put forward) and is entitled "Third Generation NGO Strategies: A Key to People-centred Development" (in *World Development*, Vol. 15, Supplement, pp. 145-159).

> shared ideal. Participants in successful movements collaborate in continuously shifting networks and coalitions. They may quarrel over ideological issues and tactics. But where they have been successful, their efforts have generated a reinforcing synergy. (Korten 1990: 124)

As indicated by its subtitle, the ultimate aim of this study is to present the perspective of a fourth generation strategy or approach as the mode of development engagement which holds the greatest prospect for an authentic participation by the Christian churches in development. Development, as suggested in the above quote from Korten's book, now more than anything else and still in a more radical way than in a third generation strategy, has come to be viewed in terms of a '*politics of ideas*', as a condition of change to be brought about by *the power of ideas, values, (transformed) relationships and communication*[14]. And it is to this sphere of expertise, this *unlimited space* of social life that one may argue the churches (and religion in general) also belong. While the notions of 'idea' and 'value' institutions cannot define them completely (as they are from a sociological and theological point of view also many other things), the churches can (at their best) be defined as institutions who are educated in their own peculiar way in a 'politics of ideas', who perceive as their primary task the changing of minds, conscience and behaviour of human beings and (other) institutions (e.g. the state and government).

At this point it should be pointed out how the notions of 'limited space' versus 'unlimited space' are especially important to the argument, as it indicates the significance of a fourth generation strategy as opposed to the third generation strategy for the churches still more than for an NGO and civil society sector in general. While maintaining particular significance as a progressive mode of development engagement, it follows that a third generation strategy still represents a strategy of a *limited* space, especially for the churches. In this mode of involvement the churches in particular would not only be confronted with a secular, public and organised space that does not easily welcome them as meaningful participants, but at the same time also with a specialised terrain for which they themselves traditionally have displayed little skills, appreciation and experience. It can be added that it indeed represents a

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[14] Here the order (very much in compliance with churches and religion in general's own position) of 'structures' before 'attitudes' is actually reversed: the power of ideas/values becomes the precondition for structural change more than the other way around.

terrain of public activity that for the churches (as in the case of a broader NGO sector) cannot be the beginning and end of a strategy of large-scale transformation, which (*a la* Korten) has to go beyond this.

More appropriate to the churches in particular would be the unlimited space of the fourth generation strategy. For here they do not have to be restricted and marginalised by the institutional processes of policy-making. Here they could partake in a larger (transnational) civil society space, in an 'idea politics', a 'movement politics' in the most radical sense of the word that does not let itself be confined to set places, spaces and institutions[15]. In this sphere they would also find much in common with the new social movements and their supporting actors (e.g. NGOs), who are driven forward by similar ideals, ideas and values on the issues of peace, human rights, women, environment, democracy, people-centred development, and so on. In this unlimited space they would be able to fulfill what they in fact can do best, namely appeal to and change the attitudes and consciousness of people across boundaries and cultures. In this space their general, but sometimes also specific ethical teachings, would appeal to a considerable civil society audience which overlaps with their own constituency. And lastly, as also pointed out in this study, in this sphere they would experience an emerging *new appraisal* for the contribution of religion to development: not only by someone like David Korten, but in fact by what can be called *a broader 'alternative' intellectual movement in the field of development and the social sciences, which this study will put forward as a further complementary articulation of the fourth generation strategy and vision.* According to this study, in this broader 'alternative dynamics' religion (and by implication the churches) is in an increasing manner recognised as a significant, if not *indispensable* actor in promoting (but also resisting) the implementation of particular values (e.g. peace and reconciliation) viewed as the

[15] The definition of 'unlimited space', at this point, correlates well with the notion of 'transnational civil society space' which Susanne Hoeber Rudolph comes to discuss in an article on "Transnational Religions and Fading States". Following the political theorist, Ronnie D. Lipschutz, transnational civil society has, for Hoeber Rudolph, come to denote those emerging and actual "self-conscious constructions of networks of knowledge and action, by decentred, local actors that cross the reified boundaries of space as though they were not there" (1996: 317). Importantly, it denotes an emerging and actual transnational activity (of which religion has very much become a part) that is today constantly negotiating its own autonomous position vis-à-vis the state. It is an automous position that can be defined as "a space for self-conscious, organized actors to assert themselves for and against state policies, actions, and processes" (ibid).

precondition and foundation for meaningful development[16]. In this 'alternative dynamics' an increasing appreciation for religion's role to provide the spiritual energy and vision (at least in part) for the collective action and social transformation advocated by the new social movement politics, is encountered.

Having spelled out in brief what is propagated in this study as the prospects of a fourth generation and, to a lesser extent, third generation development approach for the meaningful participation of the Christian churches in contemporary development, a more concrete framework for the churches' participation in fourth and third generation strategic development action will finally be proposed. This framework will be presented in the form of a concluding chapter in which it is argued that the ecumenical development debate explored in this study respresents a remaining incentive to the churches' progression to third and fourth generation strategic development activity. The discussion will then continue to propose a number of broad *beacons* that, beyond a historical and contemporary ecumenical development perspective, may guide the churches to new levels of meaningful participation in fourth and third generation development strategies. Based on our exploration of third and fourth generation strategic development meaning in this study, they will be: (i) the *new social movements*, (ii) the *new communication solidarities*, (iii) *alternative development policy* and (iv) *'soft culture'*.

With this exercise in the concluding chapter this study embarks on a conscious attempt to adopt the idea- and value-centred language of the fourth generation and to a certain extent third generation strategies. It aims to broaden and fill in the basic perspectives and language gained from the exploration of the third and fourth generation approaches to development, by still drawing on a *wider*, *complementary, interdisciplinary* and *normative* social scientific field. It will be a wider corpus which once again includes complementary perspectives from the field of development theory, but which, as the above proposed modes or roles might suggest, also includes further political, sociological, communication and cultural specific perspectives.

As this reflection could be taken as an extension of the approach in this study to go beyond a critical theological-ecclesiastical perspective and find a deepening and

[16] See for instance how this perspective or position on the role of religion in development is clearly found in Korten's argument (1990: 188-191).

innovative perspective in a broader social-scientific debate on development and transformation, it should be stated how this particular discussion comes full circle in another sense too. The intention is ultimately to once again draw selectively on perspectives from the discipline of theology, that is, from progressive theological perspectives or discourses also outside the direct theological/ecumenical development debate (such as Ulrich Duchrow's perspectives on alternatives to global capitalism from a social theological point of view, the World Parliament of Religion's 'Declaration toward a Global Ethic', perspectives from the WCC debate on civil society, debates on public theology/religion, feminist theological perspectives, Jürgen Moltmann's perspective on a theological expression of joy) that might contribute to a fourth and third generation language - especially as the mode of development engagement which this language anticipates would now involve the meaningful participation of the Christian churches. Articulated in a different way, through this theological and religious input this study emphasises its ideal of true *integration*, which eventually has the aim to come to a mode of *interdisciplinarity* through which the perspectives drawn from the broad social-scientific base envisaged, might be integrated into a unified, complementary and normative framework or discourse-praxis - one in which theology, religion, and indeed the churches would also interactively and constructively participate, often in an implicit and anonymous manner, but at times also explicitly[17].

[17] Here this study closely relates to the position in the contemporary public theological debate which determines that theological discourse ought to become anonymous or secular in order to effectively and meaningfully participate on the public terrain (see Lategan 1995: 226-228). Yet, while this can be stated as the basic mode of discourse adhered to in this study, it at the same time does not want to omit theology and the churches from speaking at particular moments in the public discourse and context a more explicit, discernible theological and religious language serving and complementing this very discourse (which thus also implies that the theological and religious discipline will, in so far as the academic debate involves the public involvement of the churches/religious institutions, draw on perspectives formulated within their own discipline and presented in a more discernible own language). This, it is proposed, is admitted by a conceptual framework in which the principle of *plurality* is not forsaken as the expression of a particular *reflexive* unity, and in which no one actor and its specific language or discourse is allowed to dominate over the other actors.

CHAPTER ONE

THE ECUMENICAL DEVELOPMENT DISCOURSE: *CHARITY*

1.1 Introduction

The contemporary theological and ecclesiastical concern with the issue of development cannot be studied in a historical vacuum. Having indicated in the introductory section how a development concern in official terms and in the case of the churches presumes a relatively recent applied concept and era of social involvement[1], a closer definition of the churches' prior engagement with the contemporary problems of poverty and socio-economic deprivation, is therefore necessary called for. It would be through such a definition that we could come to a fuller determination of the meaning of *development*, a concept which apparently came to denote the progression in the churches' understanding and engagement with the contemporary social predicament vis-à-vis earlier modes of understanding and engagement.

It will be shown in this chapter how in the broader corpus of ecumenical literature on development set out in the introduction, a definition of the churches' socio-economic engagement in contemporary history prior to the 'era of development', can in a most critical and particular way be found in the book, *Separation without Hope? Essays on the Relation between the Church and the Poor during the Industrial Revolution and the Western Colonial Expansion.* Initiated by the World Council of Churches' Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development (CCPD) and published at the beginning of the 1980s[2], it is in this study that CCPD had put before the ecumenical movement and the churches in general, a particular *historical perspective* to guide their understanding of contemporary socio-economic realities and their own engagement with those realities in comparison with past modes of engagement. As

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[1] The World Council of Churches' (WCC's) World Conference on Church and Society at Geneva in 1966 has been indicated as the actual landmark of a theological and ecclesiastical development concern.

[2] Published for the first time by the World Council of Churches in 1978, a second edition was published in 1980 by Orbis Books. In this chapter the latter edition is used as source.

the above-mentioned title indicates, it comprises a historical perspective that for CCPD and its authors had to be traced back to the *industrial revolution* and the period of *western colonial expansion* during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (1800-1914). In the explanatory words of Julio de Santa Ana, in the editorial preface:

> Before embarking on a discussion of present-day relations between the poor and the Church, we feel it is essential to take time to reflect on what these relations were during the industrial revolution and the period of western colonial expansion (1800-1914), when the attitudes directly affecting the nature of the problem as we face them today, first developed. (1980a: vii)

It would be impossible to do justice to the full range of perspectives and rich layer of case studies[3] emanating from the above-mentioned study. The aim here will nevertheless be to show how one major assumption might be extracted from the study as a whole by which a meaningful synthesis can be made of the various perspectives on the churches' response to the social problems in industrial and colonial society during the demarcated period. This assumption (which can be found explicitly in a number of the essays and implicitly in the others) is that in those instances where the churches did in fact respond to the plight of the poor and the social problems that erupted with the social changes brought about by the industrial revolution and subsequent colonial expansion, *the response in general merely involved a mode of social engagement that could be defined by the notion of charity*[4].

Having stipulated that the dissection of the deeper meaning of charity is the central aim of this chapter, it will first of all be indicated how such a meaning of the churches' socio-economic engagement is informed by a particular socio-ethical evaluation of the far-reaching social changes caused by the industrial revolution. Against this background it will be shown how, for the particular authors, the notion of *charity* denotes much more than merely an innocent and pious social involvement by the churches and the Christian élite in the newly industrialised and colonialised societies. It will be indicated how, against the background of the above-mentioned

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[3] In the above-mentioned study, contributions are made by ten authors (excluding Julio de Santa Ana's editorial conclusion) writing respectively on the nineteenth century societies of Western Europe, Britain, Germany, North America, Russia, the Arab Orthodox world, Latin America, Asia and Africa.

[4] See in this regard, for instance, the editorial conclusion by Julio de Santa Ana at the end of the study in which such general assumptions on the specific notion of charity are clearly indicated (see 1980b: 174-177).

socio-ethical evaluation, the notion of charity, in fact, defines a whole mental attitude and ideological presupposition or bias amongst the churches by which they showed themselves to be implicit and explicit agents of the status quo rather than actors seriously concerned with the sufferings and interest of the poor majority. In all, it will be indicated how the notion of charity captures a mode that, for the authors of the study, summarises the beginning and end of an ecclesiastical social involvement in the period of industrial and colonial expansion, an involvement that made little impact towards alleviating the actual *causes* of social suffering.

1.2 Socio-ethical evaluation

Through the first essay by André Biéler, "Gradual Awareness of Social, Economic Problems (1750-1900)", the above-mentioned WCC study presented a more profound socio-ethical evaluation of the social changes brought about by the industrial revolution[5].

Foremost in this author's evaluation would be the postulation that humanity in general and the churches in particular, had come to deal with a phenomenon of social change that, up to the present, had only been *partly* perceived and mastered. It indicates, according to him, "the astonishing fact of runaway development", "with roots reaching back into Greco-Roman antiquity, that only began to produce its innumerable, galloping and all-transforming effects in the 19th century" (1980: 4).

> It must be admitted, then, that viewed in a long term perspective of human history, the scientific and industrial revolution, as a phenomenon with radically subversive consequences for all societies, has *never yet* been completely analysed and understood. To a great extent it is still mysterious. It is not all the case that science, of which we are so proud, has succeeded in identifying all its elements, discovering all its factors, working out all its mechanisms... Since the process has only been partially understood, it has only been partially possible to master it. Its future course is therefore completely unknown. No human group at the present time, in east or west, north or south, whatever its ideology, can claim to have succeeded in mastering it. That is why the havoc it caused in the past, and even more the damage which its exponential growth...

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[5] Whereas a more profound *general* socio-ethical evaluation of the social changes brought about by the industrial revolution can be found in the essay of Biéler, but to a certain extent also in the concluding essay of Julio de Santa Ana, it can be said that the other essays in *Separation without Hope?* deal more exclusively with the *strategic response* of the Christian churches to the above-mentioned social changes. In these essays the general evaluation explicitly found in the essays of Biéler and De Santa, is *implicitly* sustained.

> is actually doing to the human and planetary ecosystem, disconcerts and baffles even those who are contributing to its explosion. (ibid)

From the point of view of social progress, Biéler conceded that it was particularly unjust to deny the industrial revolution the good it had done. The balance sheet includes both debit and credit entries. Yet, and this brings him to the essence of his argument, from the point of view of Christian faith, attention had to be directed primarily to the factor of *human suffering* inherent to the process (1980: 9). It was and remains a feature of modern society that debars Christians "from any pretension to objective, morally and ideologically neutral observation" (1980: 5). To them the question has to be raised whether *they*, in the light of such suffering and the profound social eruptions brought about, have come to show any *growth of understanding* and commitment toward this common feature:

> Can we really speak at the present time of a historical process of growth of understanding on the part of the Christian churches and sects in the West of the social and economic problems created by the industrial revolution, when in fact the extent, complexity and speed of the upheavals that mark the spread of technological civilization appear increasingly to escape the notice of our contemporaries? (Biéler 1980: 3)

For Biéler, and for the writers of the study throughout, the outstanding and most destructive feature of the industrial revolution, was the ever-increasing and ongoing *pauperisation* of the majority of the world's people (1980: 9). As summarised by Julio De Santa Ana at the beginning of his concluding essay, it is this recognition that in fact constitutes the common denominator of the study as a whole: "...in all the situations dealt with in these essays, we encounter the fact of poverty, the presence of the poor... We have here a universal phenomenon" (1980b: 171).

Informed by Biéler's more detailed evaluation, pauperisation, in the identified period, indicates a phenomenon characterised by the common sight of "immense human groups crowding in search of work into zones of industrial concentration ill-prepared to receive them" (1980: 9). More specifically, it denotes a phenomenon that particularly involved the *working classes*. They are people who executed some sort of labour, but under conditions of permanent impoverishment (i.e. drop in wages and working conditions) as they would come to experience the subversive competition from machines and the growth of the population. They are people, who as a result,

have until the present-day suffered extreme forms of *exploitation* and whose exploited cheap labour stands in stark contrast with the improved living standards of a relatively small minority of the working classes, specifically those in the industrial countries of the West and East (ibid).

Biéler referred to this process as the phenomenon of "[i]ndustrial serfdom in the new urban centres" of the world and pointed out that it took place simultaneously and side by side with the exploitation of those living in the colonies of the new industrialised countries. It was a coinciding process as it *necessitated* the conquest of people and resources in the new colonies to sustain the initial accumulation of profits and also to bear the consequent cost of the infrastructure needed for industrial expansion (ibid). It likewise entailed the impoverishment of the large majority of people in the latter societies[6] and the enrichment of a relatively small proportion of the remaining population (1980: 5)[7].

In conclusion Biéler, and in a complementary way De Santa Ana, came to define the deeper meaning[8] of the pauperisation in industrial and colonial society as involving a number of characteristic features or consequences. Drawing upon a definition by Max Pietsch, Biéler pointed out that this phenomenon involved:

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[6] It is noted by De Santa Ana in his editorial conclusion, that the factors of the uprooting, exploitation and pauperisation of the broad masses in the colonised societies are clearly brought out in the contributions of Julio Barreiro, C. I. Itty and Sam Kobia to the study (1980b: 182) (i.e. by those authors representing the various societies or regions exploited by colonialisation: Barreiro (Latin America), Itty (Asia), Kobia (Africa)).

[7] This statement could be further qualified by noting that the enrichment of people in the colonised societies was, and still is, of a far smaller scale in comparison to the enrichment of people in the industrialised countries (particularly as such contrast unfolded itself in the later periods of nation-state formation and political independence). In accordance with this observation it could be pointed out how Julio Barreiro, in the final section of his essay, recognises the multinational companies (who in terms of the above statement represent a very small section of local and foreign economically privileged) as "the new conquistadores" vis-à-vis the exploited and impoverished indigenous communities (in terms of the above statement the large majority of people) in Latin America. In contemporary Latin American society, Barreiro argues, the trucks, planes and rifles of the multinational companies, have merely replaced the horses, armour and swords of the Spaniards and Portuguese. They have become the new conquerors of the great mineral and ecological wealth of the region at the cost of the local and indigenous peoples who, as a direct result, have suffered genocide on a large scale and who, away from their natural habitat, have been compelled to do manual labour of a deadly kind (such as in the mines) (1980: 134). Referring to the factor of forced migration, the following description of Barreiro further describes the common sight identified by Biéler and mentioned in the main discussion above (see again the last paragraph on page 18):

> Equally dramatic is... the vast legion of men, women and children of indigenous origin who each year swell the ranks of the migrants; because of the lack of work and poor health conditions in their natural environment, they are obliged to move to the huge, crowded, absurd cities of Latin America, ending up in the *"barrios de emergencia"* (shanty towns), with no security of employment, an easy prey to sickness, malnutrition, economic exploitation, prostitution, and so on. (ibid)

[8] These are characteristic features which consequently inform the current limited understanding mentioned in the quote on pp. 14-15.

(i) a distinct *sociological* and *anthropological* factor whereby the human person would be bereaved of property, life-sustaining resources, family and neighbourhood ties. It points to a situation in which he/she fell into a state of economic dependence, had been torn from his/her roots, militarised in his/her work, estranged from nature and mechanised in his/her daily activities. It points to a situation, in short, which caused a serious state of human *devitalisation* and *depersonalisation* (1980: 10).

(ii) a powerful factor of *demoralisation*[9] of the formally employed person for whom 'work', instead of being a positive gain or source of creativity, would become nothing more than a servile means to an end, directly contributing to the vicious circle of reckless and unfulfilled living:

> The more conscious the workers become of the inner emptiness of their work, the more they seek compensation by squandering their wages, only too often in amusements and pleasures that are no less mechanical and empty than their work. (ibid)

Having pointed to the latter closer analysis of Biéler (and consequently of Max Pietsch) as basic to the understanding of the phenomenon of pauperisation caused by the above-mentioned events, De Santa Ana also emphasised that such phenomenon had furthermore to be seen as

(iii) the unequivocal result or consequence of *social injustice of a structural kind.* The existence of the poor and the social fact of poverty (i.e. the factors mentioned in (i) and (ii)) in the period in question are not be attributed merely to natural causes or to personal conduct, but to structural causes producing injustice, inequality, dependence, and destitution. Poverty, as such, had been the result of economic growth of the kind which brought large profits to some, while offering hardly even a bare subsistence to others. In sum, it had been the result of the exploitation of human beings by other human beings[10] (1980b: 182).

It was important to have put forward, in the last four pages or so, a brief exposition of the critical socio-ethical evaluation of industrial and colonial society that is to be

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[9] A factor which for us is closely related to the factors mentioned in (i) as it likewise pertains to the notion of the total alienation of the human person (that is, a form of alienation that comprises all spheres of human life). See how the notion of alienation is also furthermore used by De Santa Ana (1980b: 182).

[10] For De Santa Ana the way in which women and children were compelled to work during the last years of the 18th century and beginning of the 19th century, could be taken as a foremost example of such exploitation (1980b: 182).

found in the study under discussion. Through this exposition we came to see how this evaluation postulates that we are in actual fact dealing here with a phenomenon which in general has been ill understood and which has generated a state of pauperisation on an unprecedented scale. Subsequently, this evaluation would now also constitute the basis for a series of interrelated questions asked in the above-mentioned study, particularly with regard to the churches' response to the social eruptions caused by the industrial revolution and subsequent colonial expansion. On the basis of this evaluation, questions were specifically asked about the extent to which Christians and the Christian churches showed an understanding for the above-mentioned developments or features. As these are fundamentally related to questions of actual social praxis, it was asked not only in *what* ways Christians and the churches reacted and dealt with those developments or features in practice (Biéler 1980: 10), but also *what* was the nature of the relationship between the churches and the poor, the exploited and non-beneficiaries, in the new system (see De Santa Ana 1980a: vii).

Furthermore, as the latter interrogation relates to an indissoluble *theological* imperative, the above are also questions that sprung from the very heart of the Gospel message, which affirm the poor as the heirs of the Kingdom of God. At the deepest level such interrogation therefore has to answer the question as to what extent the churches have been faithful to the Gospel message that demands a distinct participation in changing the social conditions of the poor. It is an *ecumenical* reading of the Gospel message that, to finally quote De Santa Ana, (not less radical than a critical social-ethical interrogation) takes a fundamental *structural* approach to the social problems at hand:

> The proclamation of the good news must be rooted in practical action to secure a transformation of the structures which presuppose the existence of poverty and indeed tend inevitably to create poverty. The proclamation of the message of Jesus requires the Church to engage in action to promote justice at the social level (both institutional and structural) and not simply at the level of the individual. (1980b: 182)

1.3 Charity: three meanings of an ecclesiastical response

We have referred to the central place that the concept of charity takes in the study under discussion, as it conceptualises what its authors in general concluded to be the churches' inadequate and limited response to the social eruptions caused by the industrial revolution and colonial expansion. We may now look in greater detail at the actual meaning and implications of the kind of social action denoted by the concept. Taking into account the above-mentioned critical evaluation of the period in question (1.2), the following *synthesis* of the meaning of charity is extracted from the study as a whole:

1.3.1 A first meaning: works of charity denote a first stage, but only first, in the growth of awareness amongst the Christian churches of the social and economic problems that arose with the industrial revolution and colonial expansion.

This perspective, first of all, recognises that Christians and the Christian churches in part, did not stand apathetic to the sufferings of the poor. Biéler noted that it was a human condition to which the churches and individual Christians actively responded from the very dawn of the industrial revolution by doing works of charity (1980: 10). As further appraised by this author, it was a kind of engagement that, "when undertaken seriously with faith, mobilized a great deal of effort, energy, time and money of an active minority" (1980: 13). De Santa Ana also concluded that it comprised at best a relationship with the poor that went deeper than "a paternalism inspired by pity"[11] (1980b: 175). It was, at times, a genuine and sincere engagement, as implied by the example of Sam Kobia of the early mission stations in Africa that served as the homes of ex-slaves and social outcasts[12]. It rendered some sort of identity and safeguard to such people:

> They gave refuge and a sense of belonging to those who otherwise could have lived a very hopeless and miserable life. The social outcasts could not help but embrace an institution which recognized him or her as a person worthy of respect. (1980: 162)

Charity, or social service, as C. I. Itty indicated in his systematic exposition of the churches' involvement in Asian society, comprised a substantial range of categories:

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[11] See the subsection on paternalism below (page 27 vv).

[12] This is the example, incidentally, with which De Santa also substantiates his point of appraisal (see 1980b: 175).

education[13], health services[14], social welfare[15], and some sort of economic development[16] (see 1980: 143-146). It (charity, aid to the poor) was a mode of involvement, as pointed out by Nicolai Zabolotsky in his discussion of the relation between the Russian Orthodox Church and the poor in the period under question, that in a few cases, also took another direction, namely to promote social, economic and political reforms (1980: 74). Lastly, according to André Biéler, it was those Christians most devoted to reaching out to the poor through charitable work who, in countries such as England and France, gave their active support to the anti-slave movement and protested against the oppressive lot of the very poor (1980: 11-12).

However, it is with such a range of activities that the contribution of the churches stopped. To start with, the considerable effort by Christians to engage themselves with the plight of the poor in industrial and colonial society through what has been described as works of charity, was recognised by a number of authors in the study. In the best of those efforts, these authors would recognise a noticeable sincerity and sensitivity (at least by a minority) to the sufferings of the poverty-stricken. But, and this constitutes the common ground amongst the various authors, despite all the good that it intended and entailed, the churches' involvement made little contribution towards changing society for good. According to Biéler, it denotes a *first stage*, but only first (!), in the growth of awareness amongst the Christian churches of the social and economic problems that arose with the industrial revolution and colonial expansion (see Biéler 1980: 10-13). It had little scope for, and understanding of, the

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[13] According to Itty this is the sphere of service to which the missions and churches had given the greatest attention. Summarising the Christian involvement in this sphere, he notes:

> Christian missions pioneered in introducing modern school systems in almost every Asian country. In a number of countries, university level education was also initiated by the Christian churches. Their involvement in education is far more than the proportionate strength of the Christian population in the nation. (1980: 143-144)

[14] According to Itty this has been another important sphere of involvement by the missions and churches. It was this sector who had been mainly responsible for introducing the modern system of medical services based on Western medicine and dispersed through clinics, hospitals, sanatoria, etc. into Asian countries (1980: 144-145).

[15] This sphere included the Christian churches and missions' often pioneering work in fields such as orphanages, schools for the blind, deaf and dumb, mental hospitals, houses for widows and unwed mothers. It also pertains to the major relief programmes which this sector launched in times of famine, such as in India and China during the years between 1877 and 1900 (Itty 1980: 145).

[16] This constitutes the least imaginative area of involvement by the churches and missions, according to Itty. Taking a marginal place over and against the first three spheres of involvement mentioned above, it nevertheless refers to a limited scale of programmes initiated to improve the living standards of the new converts, such as handicrafts, leather work, brick and tile making, rural projects to improve agricultural production, and the organisation of co-operatives and credit unions (1980: 145-146).

structural and *ideological* factors underlying the problem. In the words of De Santa, the net result of all the churches' efforts, was that the poor were indeed served, "but the social reality of poverty and its underlying *causes* went practically unchanged" (1980b: 174; italics added). As Biéler added, the charity work done by the churches in the end, turned out to be nothing more than "a sort of compensation for the increasingly harmful effects of the capitalist and colonialist expansion of Europe" (1980: 12). It was only a minority amongst the minority of socially concerned Christians that also engaged in what he calls second and third stages in the growth of social awareness[17]. For the majority of Christians sensitive to the sufferings of the time, works of charity continued to be the *principle remedy* for the ongoing pauperisation of the masses in the industrial centres. They were not able or adjusted to explore "the origins of the social evil whose ravages they perceived, or the means of correcting it" (1980: 13).

As elaborated in the discussion on paternalism below (1.3.3), it follows from the latter observation that the Christians and churches who engaged in charity work, were by and large trapped in an ideological frame of mind which made it impossible for them to progress to other stages of growth in social awareness. They, the Christians doing charity work, were from the *middle classes* of society who, as Biéler indicated, unconsciously attributed "a *sacred character* to the ideologies and existing structures of their social or national environment" (1980: 5-6; italics added). As this could, in the context of the overall argument, be explained in terms of the notion of *power*, it follows, if only on the subconscious level, that an involvement by means of charity work conveniently did not *critically* challenge the own position of power of the Christian middle classes (social, political and economic) and by implication the societal and mental structures that safe-guarded that position of power. It did not challenge the *psychological comfort* which they (the middle-class Christians) earned

[17] In his discussion Biéler defines four stages in growth of awareness. Having identified charitable work as a first stage of awareness (see 1980: 10-13), the farthest a very small minority of Christians would, according to Biéler, progress on the way of critical social awareness and involvement, were second and third stages, namely the recognition of the need for state legislative intervention (second stage; see 1980: 13-15) and studies, publications, inquiries and associations for social progress (third stage; see 1980: 15-19). According to Biéler, and as especially also reflected in our exposition of a third meaning of charity in 1.3.3. below, Christians and the churches were hardly involved in a fourth stage, something he calls the emancipation of the working classes and the class war (see 1980: 19-24).

by being the actual benefactors and directors of the social process which supposedly was to benefit the poor in society.

To close this exposition of the first meaning of charity with a perspective and quote from John Kent's essay on the relationship between the churches and the trade union movement in Britain in the 19th century, the *factor of power*, according to this author, accounted for the irreconcilable *separation* between the churches and the trade union movement (see 1980: 36-37), and, for that matter, the churches' categorical resistance against any idea of revolution[18]. The activities of the latter movement - vis-à-vis works of charity - brought the churches and their members from the middle-classes face to face with the irreversible issue of power *redistribution* - substantial redistribution of power which they were unwilling to sacrifice:

> Unionism was concerned with, and rose out of, the directed classes. And what was always implicit, and finally explicit, in both the revolutionary tradition (from 1776) and the distinct socialist tradition (from a slightly later period), was the proposal that some power, even great power, would have to be given (not *ought* to be, but would *have* to be given) to large numbers of people who in the traditional western society had been the directed, the subjects of the powers of others. Because unionism always meant some degree of redistribution of economic power, it inevitably threatened the redistribution of all power. (1980: 33)

1.3.2 A second meaning: a social involvement merely through charity, denotes a church sector by and large lacking the capacity towards a critical, social theoretical understanding that could have enabled that sector to go beyond such a confined mode of thinking and activity.

Charity, as the discussion above has made clear, involved much more than a mere innocent (neutral) and pious social engagement by the churches. Far from this, it accompanied a distinct *world-view* or *ideological presupposition* which rendered a 'sacred' meaning to the existing societal order, which accepted this order as an

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[18] The idea of revolution is also meaningfully set out by De Santa Ana. Referring to the churches' *a priori* anti-revolutionary position in industrial and colonial history, he points out how a revolutionary activity or line of thinking stands against what the churches at best would embrace, namely a charitable and more or less reformist frame of mind. To explain this further in terms of the notion of power applied in the main discussion above: In the case of charity and reform, the status quo (the middle-classes, the churches) remained the directors and determinators of the process (not at their own cost). In the case of revolution, however, a process of social change is implied in favour of the poor, the working classes, or whom De Santa Ana calls "the victims of the conditions which generate poverty", who should have become the actual subjects or directors of the process (see 1980b: 183-184).

absolute given, as 'essentially good'. Moreover, as an activity performed by the middle classes and privileged of society, it assisted the psychological comfort of that social grouping. It provided them with little if any *critical input* whereby the ideologies and structures that sustained such comfort, would be questioned and whereby *other* modes of social involvement would be explored.

Charity, by denoting the beginning and end of the churches' involvement with the social problems of the day, indicates *the lack of any sufficient social scientific knowledge-base or insight in the churches' formal theological make-up* with which to understand the wider political, economic and social regulations of society (in this case a most complex modernist society). It presumes a theological discourse which failed to challenge the very ideological presuppositions or world-view underlying such regulations. It presumes a theological consciousness incapable of exposing the historical temporariness and biased nature of such regulations, and as such, of stressing the *possibility* of forming alternative regulations. It points to a theological awareness that does nothing more than serve such regulations by explaining or formalising them.

It follows that a relationship of mutual enforcement could be identified between the social activity of charity (praxis) and the prevailing theological discourse ('theory') of the churches. Charity, as an activity which brought the churches into the realm of social praxis, for reasons of its own nature, had posed no *critical* challenge to a theological discourse devoid of meaningful social insight or understanding. It points to a theological discourse which, at the same time, appeared impotent in converting that very ongoing charity activity into other modes of critical social involvement.

Charity, as implicated in Nicolai Zabolotsky's discussion of the churches in Russia, was an activity which, in the ecclesiastical consciousness, had found its very point of orientation in the above-mentioned *a-social* theological discourse. It is an activity which according to this consciousness, could only be successful if executed within a theological determination in which the *place of worship* represents the fundamental starting-point for the service of the poor, for the clergy as guides and directors of the charitable efforts, and for larger society (of which the members of the churches were a part) as executors of works of charity (1980: 74). It is a framework in which a

centrifugal order of things is clearly stipulated, a framework in which *theological* criteria takes precedence over the social. It determines that:

> Only if welfare work springs from the place of worship and is guided towards its aims by the church hierarchy can it be stable, free from the influence of the pride of the do-gooder ...But if it issues from the Church as a central point, and is directed to a definite goal by members of the hierarchy, charitable work can be successfully carried out with the greatest possible active participation of society itself. (A. Vertelovsky, quoted by Zabolotsky, ibid)

For Zabolotsky, however, such determination by and large remained "merely a pious wish" (ibid). While he would not go on to elaborate on this pronouncement, a further explanation could well be derived from the larger context of his discussion according to which charity work done by the churches in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, did not achieve the ideal where "Russia would no longer have any hungry, destitute, sick, forsaken people. The Church was not in a position to solve the problem of the poor, and this constituted the tragedy of its encounter with the world of those in need." (1980: 62) Contrary to the mobilisation of Russian society at large by the inner dynamics of the church (as anticipated in the quote above), which supposedly would ultimately bring about a complete eradication of the problem of poverty, it (i.e. the church) was, as pointed out by him, confronted rather by a society (i.e. Russia of the nineteenth and early twentieth century) of growing contradictions in all spheres of life[19] (ibid). But, in the end, this also did not matter so much to the churches. For as Zabolotsky indicated, near the end of his essay, they had a different understanding of their primary task, which was one of a particular *spiritual* kind:

> But the Church, let us repeat, did not possess its own explicitly formulated programme of political and socio-economic reconstruction of life in Russia; above all, it refrained from that kind of activity, not without reason, believing that precisely as Church it has a much more important field of responsibility.
>
> First and foremost, the Church's responsibility consisted (in the actually existing conditions of relations with the state) of maintaining its own proper identity as an institute of salvation in the proclamation of the Gospel, that is, in its internal and external mission, in the moral education of the faithful, in the celebration of the liturgy, the sacraments and rites of the Church, in pastoral care of souls. (1980: 81)

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[19] It was this situation (of overt contradictions), according to Zabolotsky (1980: 62), which gave way to the radical assessment of values and far-reaching changes that ultimately led to the 1917 socialist revolution, a historical event and process that ostracised and radically opposed the churches.

If, with the preceding discussion, a most important *existential* clarification has been given that accounts for what at most can be stipulated as a *limited* charity involvement by the churches (since a theological paradigm was at work here which absolutised the own peculiar self-understanding and self-concern of the churches vis-à-vis the larger social world[20]), it is to the perspective of André Biéler that this discussion should turn. The latter provided a further explanation of the constraints that were (and that for him still are) at stake in the theological and social make-up of the churches. Closely related to the central point already made above about the churches' lack of a critical social theoretical base, pertinent *mental*, *cultural* and *ideological* factors were, for Biéler, at work that explain the constraints of the churches when it comes to, as he calls it, their "growth of awareness" of social and economic problems (1980: 6).

According to Biéler, an explanation of the churches' limited growth of awareness and actual social involvement (i.e. charity) during the industrial revolution, goes much deeper than a mere conscious restriction or delimitation of their relation to the social sphere. What has to be scrutinised, is the very mental and cultural structure upon which the churches operated, which by and large still reflected a *pre-industrial* frame of mind. Sustained, firstly, by the power of a (pre-industrial) theological and religious tradition which had a firm hold on the churches, this state of affairs was, secondly,

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[20] It can be noted here, in anticipation of the discussion in the next chapter (see 2.2) and with reference to the brief notations in the introduction (see again the second paragraph on page 3 and footnotes 9 and 11), that this particular problematisation of mainstream Christian theology has also been taken up as a crucial aspect in the earlier ecumenical debate on development. Turning for instance to an important series of working papers on "a theology of development" launched by Sodepax (The Committee on Society, Development and Peace constituted jointly in 1968 by the Holy See and the WCC) at the end of the 1960s, this particular problematisation is explicitly cast in a paper by the South American theologian, Gustavo Gutierrez Merino, in terms of a *church versus the world* dichotomy. For this author this distinction, which according to him prevailed in what he called "the New Christianity" (a phenomenon dating from the 16th century onwards), captures the basic problem of a contemporary engagement by the churches in development. Capturing the basic rationale of this way of thinking and its untenability in a contemporary social context, he stated:

> The world was presented much more clearly than in the past as existing in its own right, distinct from the Church, and having its own aims and purposes... The Church as an institution should not interfere in temporal matters except (following the oldest traditions) ethically, which meant in practice through the conscience of the individual Christian. Thus the building of the earthly city acquired its own "consistencia"... As a result, the Church's mission in the world becomes clearer. The Church (it will be said) has two missions: evangelism and animation of the secular.. The task of building the world does not concern the Church... This consideration, in fact, makes Christianity appear to be an ideology for building up the world. Thus the two fields are clearly differentiated. Unity will be given by the Kingdom of God. The Church and the world contribute, each in its way, to the building of that Kingdom... Both from the level of concrete commitment by Christians in the world of today, and from the level of contemporary theological thinking, the two planes are seen to be inadequate... If, at a given moment, this theology motivated and supported the presence of Christians in the task of building the world, it appears now to be obsolete and ineffective vis-à-vis the new problems which confront us today. (1969: 128-129, 133)

complicated by the fact that the cultural framework of the Bible, that foremost authority to which the Christian religion appeals, is itself rural, artisanal and pre-industrial. Yet, as summed up by Biéler, from the churches and their theological faculties, came little if any systematic effort to overcome the above-mentioned constraints that could have enabled them to creatively reinterpret the Christian message and principles in the new context of industrial and technological society. This is because they lacked knowledge of political, economic and social mechanisms with which they could execute such an interpretation and go beyond the framework of private life and personal relationships that constituted the hallmark of their prevailing ethical application (1980: 7). They, the churches and their theologians, made no serious effort to acquaint themselves with those mechanisms by integrating it in their theological apparatus. They, in Biéler's words, remained "passive in regard to the development of technological society without overmuch concern about the human dramas to which it gives rise" (1980: 6).

In the light of the subsequent analysis of Biéler, it would be wrong to deduce from the above that the churches operated in a social vacuum. Bringing us back, once again, to the pertinent ideological factor already referred to earlier, it could be said that the indifference by the churches towards the new social context in which they found themselves, exposed their very *schizophrenic* nature. While pretending to be purely 'spiritual' in matters of faith and church life - which at best extended to some *neutral* charity work - the whole life style and mental attitude of the churches and their members, or what can be called their 'social existence', rendered tacit support to the dominant interests (political, economic and social) and mode of development in industrial society. As expressed by Biéler himself:

> These Christians and these theologians were unaware, and sometimes still pretend to be unaware that they have actively contributed, both by their own individual daily political, economic and commercial activities and by their ignorance of the collective effects of these activities, in promoting more and more intensely an ill-considered and irresponsible development under cover of the alleged neutrality of their spiritual and church life... Now in the light of present-day social sciences, it appears increasingly evident that this unawareness by Christians of their real participation in the process of development is a defence mechanism designed to hide the important action they exert on society by reason of their faith and of the ideology which they often combine with it. It is not true that, apart from the so-called Christian social circles, the Christian

> churches and sects are economically, socially and politically neutral, and do not take an active part in economic expansion, in the choice of its structures with their multiple good and bad effects. (1980: 6, 8)

1.3.3 A third meaning: charity work represents a form of paternalism of which the net result has been the historical, almost complete estrangement between the Christian churches, on the one hand, and the working classes and the poor, on the other.

It follows, finally, that charity work denotes an act of overt paternalism. As already indicated in the discussion, charity denotes an activity in which the middle classes direct the process. It assumes, as pointed out by De Santa Ana, "a certain *distance* between the giver and receiver of aid" (italics added). It presumes a relationship of marked *inequality*:

> There is no question of a relation of equals. However much love and compassion there may have been on the part of the churches in this relationship, therefore, it must have been an uncomfortable one for those on the receiving end, provoking responses which the would-be helpers of the poor simply could not understand. (1980b: 174)

De Santa's latter observation of incomprehension on the part of the initiators and benefactors of charity - the churches, the middle classes - would also correlate well with the idea expressed above of charity assisting the psychological[21] comfort of the benefactors or well-doers. In terms of this observation, it can be said that the *complacency* of the benefactor or well-doer in the whole charity enterprise, regarding his/her inability to close the distance which De Santa Ana is speaking of and also regarding his/her inability to show a comprehension and sensitivity which would have made the poor and beneficiaries the actual subjects and (at least) co-determinators of the social processes, expresses nothing less than an almost complete *self-centredness* on the part of the former. In that sense, charity work ultimately has to do with *his/her* (i.e. the benefactor's, well-doer's) satisfaction to (at all costs) direct and determine the social processes, if only at the subconscious level. This would, not to a lesser extent, apply to those charity activities which have earlier in the discussion been appreciated

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[21] Cf. also De Santa Ana's own observation of the predominant psychological character of the paternalistic attitude which accompanies the activities of charity (1980b: 174).

in more positive terms as at least denoting a genuine and sincere engagement[22] on the part of a Christian minority. These latter cases, which De Santa Ana called "compassionate charity" (1980b: 175), can also not escape the ultimate verdict that applies to all charity efforts in the history of the churches, in particular those charity efforts with the best emancipatory intentions. It remains an "emancipation from above", as indicated by Nicolai Zabolotsky (1980: 75), initiated and directed by those in positions of relative and absolute power.

This brings us to the overarching theme in the study under discussion. The writers of the study held that it was the very paternalistic attitude towards and way of dealing with the poor as described above, that resulted in an insurmountable and permanent *estrangement* between the Christian churches, on the one hand, and the poor and working classes, on the other. In the words of De Santa Ana, it is a "gulf between the Church and the poor... [that] is still there today and... [that] goes deep". It is an alienation that is also not to be modified by any counter-argument of a substantial Christian presence amongst the world's poor today. While such presence may be of some proportions, it is still far outweighed by the larger majority of poor and working class people estranged from and standing hostile toward the churches:

> There *are* poor people in the churches, it is true; but the proportion is far fewer than in society as whole. There *are* attempts to present the Gospel to the poor, to establish a Christian presence amongst the workers (for example, worker priests, or Christians who live in the slums of great cities or devote their lives to the cause of justice and human liberation). But these efforts do not represent a major current in the churches. The Pentecostal churches in certain parts of Latin America or Africa are described as "churches of the poor", but, as Christian Lalive d'Epinay's study of the Pentecostals in Chile makes very clear, these groups, although made up of poor people, do not really represent a "popular" mentality[23]... In view of all this, we are safe in saying, without claiming absolute validity for the statement, that the underprivileged sections of society have on the whole found no place in the churches and that these have not seriously tried to welcome them... The ultimate outcome is a vast, solid, structural *separation* between the poor and the churches. (1980b: 180)

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[22] See again the first paragraph of 1.3.1 and the quote that directly succeeds it.

[23] In the study under discussion this statement is well supported by Sam Kobia and Julio Barreiro in their essays dealing with the relation between the churches and the poor in Latin America (see Barreiro 1980: 127-136) and Africa (see Kobia 1980: 155-170) respectively.

It follows that the paternalistic charity approach with which the churches persisted in their dealings with the poor during the industrial revolution and colonial expansion, left that class of society (i.e. the poor) with a mental attitude of deep *mistrust* and *antagonism* towards religion and the churches. A point had been reached in history, as De Santa Ana pointed out, when this section of society could feel that they had reached maturity (1980b: 175). And in this discovery they experienced a religious or church sector that was little prepared (for reasons already set out earlier) to fight the social structures which they themselves came to recognise as being at the root of their sufferings. At most that sector persisted with its charitable programmes geared to *individual* rather than mass poverty, which appeared rather ineffective and insensitive towards the ongoing sufferings and exploitation of the poor (De Santa Ana, ibid).

But there is also a further perspective to the long-term experience of the poor of the charity works of the churches, as indicated by C. I. Itty in his review of that approach to poverty in Asian history. They, the poor, were in reality, not the main beneficiaries of those areas in the charity enterprise which could be regarded as most long-term in quality. Their experience of first-hand assistance, in actual fact, did not go much further than those services of a predominant *short-term* nature, such as famine relief, orphanages, institutions for the handicapped, etc. To the contrary, they were rather *bypassed* in such areas as education and health as it in actual practice happened that the rich and middle classes made better and more use of these services than the poor. They, the *new* middle class and rich, were in the end, the actual beneficiaries as the poorest people often lacked an awareness of the value of these services as well as the minimum economic means to make use of them. And where the poor did benefit to some extent, these services were restricted to the new converts rather than rendered to *the poor in general* (1980: 146).

The end result of this whole experience was a *counter-revolution* by the poor of the world that rejected religion and the churches as ally in their struggle for emancipation and justice. It is a form of active resistance, as evident from the study under discussion, which most actively and vigorously came from those poor living in industrial societies. These poor, as indicated by John Kent in his essay on the relationship between the churches and the trade union movement in England, developed their *own* sub-culture, which remained foreign to even the best formations

of solidarity that the churches could offer (see 1980: 34-36)[24]. As this author put forward the case of Christian socialism, which was an expression of Christianity that came closest to making common cause with the poor. It remained, in accordance with the notion of an 'emancipation from above' mentioned earlier[25], "a middle-class affair, an attitude recommended *to* the working class, but never very popular *in* the working class" (1980: 31).

To conclude with André Biéler's perspective of an apparent fourth stage[26] in the growth of awareness amongst the Christian churches of the social and economic problems that arose with the advent of the industrial revolution and colonial expansion, the following can be stated: referring to this stage as "the emancipation of the working classes and the class war" (see 1980: 19-24), a closer scrutiny of Biéler's description of this stage leads us to identify the underlying irony of this stage. While assuming a particular Christian participation in this stage, it in fact, in terms of Biéler's own description, came to present the working classes and the poor's ascendancy to take control of their *own* situation, to become the *subjects* of their own struggle (ibid). And as such, it very much points to the latter group as an *autonomous* force liberating itself from any religious patriarchy through its own struggle.

Assuming the solidarity of a small minority of truly committed Christians (see Biéler 1980: 24-26), there was in reality little scope for Christian participation. The poor and exploited workers had found in the institutionalised *labour movement* of the nineteenth and twentieth century, their direct ally for emancipation, a movement that was (and is) *per se* anticlerical and anti-Christian (Biéler 1980: 26). As pointed out by Biéler, there was in actual fact "nothing left for Christians who wanted to act in solidarity with the proletariat except to create denominational trade unions" (1980: 25). For the working classes, as this author finally concludes, it was already too late. They had discovered in the ideology of atheism and in the hope rendered to it by the

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[24] Kent (ibid) at this point refers to the example of the so-called Christian "Chapel communities", which as "alternative" communities of faith, achieved little lasting contact with working class people as it was ultimately a case of two different cultures which could not be reconciled. See the perspective on Christian socialism by this author mentioned further on in the present paragraph above.

[25] See again the end of the first paragraph on p. 28.

[26] See again footnote 17 in this chapter.

revolutionary doctrine of Karl Marx, a substitute for the indifferent and often hostile views held by the Christian majority.

In sum, having espoused, tacitly or expressly, the interests of capitalism and the ruling classes (of which Christian charity appeared to be a mere extension), the poor and working classes, from their perspective and actual experience, could find in the churches and religion no ally. And, for more than one reason as the foregoing discussion has made clear, a critical and committed Christian minority could not turn the tide (see Biéler 1980: 27-29).

1.4 Ecumenical renewal

> It was not until the ecumenical renewal of the first half of the following century that a different aspect of Christianity would reappear, more faithful to its original tradition and capable of responding anew to the divine inspiration of nations seeking social solidarity and supranational fraternity...
>
> Consequently, it needs to be stated emphatically how great is the merit of those few people who, following in the footsteps of the pioneers of the minority social Christian movements, originated the ecumenical movement of the last few decades; they have alerted the churches, their authorities and theologians, and have courageously brought them face to face with the complex realities of the contemporary world. They have only partly succeeded, for that matter, and not without difficulty, not without meeting with fierce resistance, and often with caustic and unjust criticism. (Biéler 1980: 28, 7)

We may close this chapter with the above extract from André Biéler's essay, which provides us with an appropriate transition point to the discussion in the next chapter. Having seen in the foregoing discussion how the notion of charity has been central to a most critical historical perspective by a number of critical authors linked to and writing for the contemporary ecumenical movement[27], it is the latter extract which requalifies *that* critical perspective to some extent. While not further elaborated upon in Biéler's essay or anywhere else in the study under discussion, we are represented here with what we may call an *ecumenical self-appreciation*, a statement of appreciation within the ecumenical movement itself which points out the different route that this representation of the Christian churches has apparently taken versus the

[27] As indicated at the beginning of this chapter, the study to which these authors have contributed and which has been the focus of the discussion in the present chapter, was initiated by the WCC's Commission on the Churches Participation in Development (CCPD).

larger majority. To interpret this further in terms of the critical perspective on charity defined in this discussion, it is suggested in the above statement of appreciation that (i) the representation in contemporary Christianity which has come to be known as the contemporary ecumenical movement, had gone beyond a charitable mentality and mode of social involvement; (ii) that the individuals and groups which represent this movement, have engaged in and have pressed for a mode or modes of social involvement pursuant of the critical structural and ideological understanding called for by the above-mentioned authors in their study and (iii) that these efforts have likewise resulted in the same kind of fierce opposition on the part of the Christian majority as experienced by a critical and committed minority in the previous century, but with the one exception, namely that this time this minority had positioned itself better in terms of its own organisational setting (with reference to the World Council of Churches and its affiliations world-wide).

In the next two chapters of this study the above-mentioned suggestion of a new direction in Christian social thought and praxis by the contemporary ecumenical movement, will be subjected to closer scrutiny. This will be done by taking a closer look at what has been indicated at the start of this study as the 'ecumenical *development* debate'. Having come to denote the apparent new conceptual framework (that is, 'development') by which the contemporary ecumenical movement or churches in particular, would express their engagement and solidarity with the poor of the world[28], such a further exploration will enable us to draw the historical comparison mentioned at the beginning of this chapter (that is, charity versus development). Through such an exploration we will now not so much be presented by the historical counterpoint, that is, the perspective (as in this chapter) on a mode of historical socio-economic engagement by the Christian churches that precedes a

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[28] C. I. Itty, an important representative of the ecumenical movement in the 1960s and 1970s, wrote the following appreciation in the introduction to the special issue in *The Ecumenical Review* that followed the 1966 WCC Conference on Church and Society in 1966:

> Development is the most crucial human concern of our time... Development is also a matter of deep moral concern... To Christians this moral challenge and human cause have deep spiritual implications. The care for the poor and the needy is part of our divine obligation. To love one's neighbour is a Christian imperative. In today's world, the concept of neighbour includes men in need everywhere and not only those in the immediate neighbourhood and the concept of love includes international economic justice. To be concerned about the development of the "Third World" is the most active expression of the Christian imperative for love and justice in our time. (1967: 249-351)

development mode of engagement by that sector, but rather with the articulation of an actual progressive discourse and praxis in a more recent, new era of ecclesiastical socio-economic engagement.

CHAPTER TWO

THE ECUMENICAL DEVELOPMENT DISCOURSE: *CRITICAL CHALLENGE*

2.1 Introduction

> The issue of development has become a major preoccupation of the churches, but the churches have not been uncritical participants in the broader debate about the goals and methods for promoting development. They have challenged fundamental assumptions and conceptions, and they have called into question many existing patterns for trying to achieve development at both the macro- and micro-levels. Not least significant, they have continuously explored the possible implications of these new insights for their own theories and actions. (Richard Dickinson 1991: 273-274)

We started this study with a positive statement of the ecumenical movement's contribution to the churches' thinking on development from one of Richard Dickinson's earliest works[1]. In that quote the same kind of *ecumenical self-appreciation* may be observed as indicated in the final section of the previous chapter. There is one difference though. While the statement once again came from a central thinker[2] in the ecumenical movement, the difference is that this time, the focus of appreciation had shifted more specifically to the notion of *development*. It upheld the pretension that the ecumenical movement had come to show the way to the rest of the Christian sector or churches of a new progressive engagement in the contemporary socio-economic problematique of poverty and underdevelopment through its concern with development.

In the same sense the quote at the beginning of this chapter can be taken as an important continuation of Dickinson's earlier statement. As the above represents a more recent statement by the same author (in his entry on 'development' in *Dictionary*

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[1] See p. 1.

[2] Being the person responsible (i.e. Dickinson) for the entry on 'development' in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement* (see also the next footnote and the next paragraph in the main discussion above), the appreciation for Dickinson's central contribution to the ecumenical movement's thinking on development, is also clearly expressed by the various representatives from the latter movement writing the respective forewords or introductions to this author's publications through the years on the ecumenical churches' participation in development. See De Santa Ana (1983: vii-viii); Itty (1975: vii-viii); Lacey (1968: 7).

of the Ecumenical Movement[3]), it not only confirms Dickinson's earlier positive pronouncement (which dates back to the beginning of the ecumenical movement's involvement with development[4]), but it also claims a positive *progression* in the ecumenical movement's whole engagement with development during the last few decades. Whereas Dickinson's earlier statement could be taken as a declaration of the ecumenical movement's participation in development *as such* (which distinguishes this group from the rest of the church sector), this more recent statement assumes in a more overt manner, a distinct *critical* engagement by the ecumenical churches in the whole development enterprise.

For Dickinson the ecumenical movement's involvement with development did not merely represent an activity of a particular factual or quantitative status, that is, of an ecumenical church sector which unconditionally or uncritically has made development one of its major preoccupations[5]. This author suggested that such an involvement by the churches presumed a progressive status on two levels. It firstly presumes that such an involvement challenges secular mainstream development discourse and praxis in a distinct way. It secondly presumes that this critical engagement also finds a particular application in terms of the churches' own theories and actions as it challenges the thinking and activities of a church sector in general.

This chapter intends to explore more closely the nature of the ecumenical development discourse along the lines of Dickinson's above-mentioned twofold statement. In this statement by Dickinson a clear example of what may be called the 'pretence of a progressive discourse' on development upheld in the ecumenical self-consciousness, can be found. The discussion will now fill in this author's claim of the ecumenical discourse's respective challenge to the church sector in general and mainstream secular development discourse by drawing on a larger corpus of writings in the ecumenical debate. Starting off with the second part of Dickinson's claim, which is directed to the churches, the discussion will, in particular, concentrate on the critical challenge which the ecumenical discourse would gradually come to pose to

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[3] Published in 1991 by Eerdmans and edited by Nicholas Lossky *et al.*

[4] With reference to our demarcation of an ecumenical development concern in the first few pages of the introduction and particular also in footnote 1 of the introductory section.

[5] See again the statement by C. I. Itty in footnote 28 of the previous chapter which makes 'development' the cardinal concept in the whole ecumenical socio-economic debate.

mainstream secular development discourse (i.e. the first part of Dickinson's claim). It will be shown how, in this framework of critical reflection, the ecumenical concept of development would in particular be formed through the three interrelated concepts of ecumenical growth, social justice and self-reliance.

2.2 Challenging the church sector

In a wider application of ecumenical writings on development the challenge to the churches can in particular be recognised in the contributions of those writers[6] who, in the earlier phase of the ecumenical development debate, had come to problematise a prevailing *church versus the world* dichotomy in mainstream theological and ecclesiastical thinking and praxis[7]. These writers proclaimed that, in contrast to mainstream theology and ecclesiastical praxis, the contemporary ecumenical concern for development represented the most significant expression of the new movement in Christianity working towards the overcoming of the latter dichotomy. It reflects, in the words of Gustavo Gutierrez Merrino, "the advance in theological thinking" which leaves behind the outmoded concept of a church versus the world distinction (1969: 133).

As this appreciation could first of all be found in the meaning of development itself, the contemporary question of development represented the most comprehensive viewpoint for a theological *reorientation* (Rendtorff 1971: 89; 1969: 206)[8].

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[6] With reference to a number of previous footnotes (see footnotes 9 and 11 in the introduction and footnote 20 in chapter one), the contributions by Trutz Rendtorff (1969; 1971) and Gustavo Gutierrez Merino (1969) are in particular recognised as most explicitly and most specifically touching upon the theme envisaged in this subsection.

[7] In close connection with the previous footnote, it should be noted that this particular problematique has already been touched upon in footnote 20 in chapter one. Whereas the discussion in this footnote points to the nature or contents of a theological expression or ecclesiastical praxis in which the above-mentioned dichotomy is sustained in a negative sense, the discussion in the main section (2.2) here concentrates on the actual *positive* overcoming of such a (negative) dichotomy in an ecumenical theology and ecclesiastical praxis - or, at least, the movement towards overcoming that problem. (See also as a further expression of the positive aspect of the church versus world theme, the second paragraph on page 3 as well as footnotes 9 and 11 in the introduction.)

[8] At this point the discussion may also refer to Rendtorff's juxtaposition of the concepts of 'development', on the one hand, and 'evolution' and 'revolution', on the other. Debated within the context of the latter author's interrogation of a prospective 'theology of development', Rendtorff argued that the notion of development provided a prevailing 'theology of revolution' (which still occupied the foreground at the WCC's Geneva Conference in 1966) with a potentially broadened meaning. This, for a start, is captured by the concept of development itself, or for Rendtorff rather the German rendering 'Entwicklung', which may "be regarded as an alternative to the opposition between revolution and evolution". In contrast to both the latter two concepts, the notion of development indicates something "more rational and more comprehensive". It implies a well-considered and constructive human activity of a kind unmatched by the other two concepts. It implies "the impetus to projection, to planning, and to positive reflection and consciously ratified change" which the other two concepts do not reflect in the same manner (Rendtorff 1971: 91). And in this very sense, it also poses a most meaningful challenge to the theological and church sector: it is the rich and comprehensive enterprise of development with its

Development, accordingly, includes "consideration of the interdependence and the participation of all productive forces" (Rendtorff 1971: 91; 1969: 208). It cannot be restricted to "the problems of economic, technological, and scientific development", as its complexity extends beyond the latter to embrace "all spheres of life". Not only does it include an indispensable 'cultural dimension', but it also constitutes a vital connection with the problem of peace which, through the ethical and institutional aspects that it entails, expresses "the most striking example of the complexity of the problem of development" (Rendtorff 1971: 95-96; 1969: 210).

Viewed from the perspective of the churches and Christian theology, the development problem in all its complexity constitutes the *motivation* for a process of profound *renewal*, a breakthrough of a (traditional) static ontology - in the structural sense (see Rendtorff 1971: 94-100; 1969: 209-213). Formative here is not only the very nature of the development process in which the churches engage (with reference to the previous paragraph), but also the *kind* of involvement to which the process of development compels the churches and Christian theology. For them such an involvement constitutes "a new form of Christian unity in the world" (1971: 95; 1969: 210). Its most immediate consequence is the reality "that the frontiers between faith and earthly tasks, Church and world, [are] becoming blurred" (Gutierrez Merrino 1969: 133). It denotes "a new, world-wide experience of unqualified Christian involvement in the vital problems of the contemporary", which clearly differs "from traditional forms of church action and theological thought" (Rendtorff 1969: 204; cf. 1971: 86) and which necessitates "the transcending of hitherto accepted theological formulations and churchly self concepts" (Rendtorff 1971: 86; cf. 1969: 204). As Rendtorff explained this in the context of what he saw to be the reality of the ecumenical churches' involvement in development:

> The dominant themes of the general Christian awareness are no longer specifically churchly in the sense that the special identity of the Christian church is the first consideration. The main interest is directed rather to world development in all its aspects. More and more the churches are seeing themselves as part of a Christian process which thematically and institutionally leads far beyond the boundaries of the

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imposition of a complex array of economic, cultural and institutional issues on the contemporary world-wide project of social change, which presents a most viable and concrete frame of reference for a new Christian orientation of worldly involvement (1971: 87) (see furthermore the continuing discussion in the main section above).

> established churches and the theological overtures they have hitherto made toward mutual understanding. (1971: 87; see also 1969: 205)

At this point in the discussion a first basic distinction could be drawn between a development involvement by the churches and a charity involvement as set out in the previous chapter. In so far as the preceding determination relates to what Rendtorff claimed to be "the real, factual, established, and growing engagement of the Christian churches in the whole development field" (1971: 94; see also 1969: 209), it denotes the definite theological and ideological separation of a certain part of the church sector (broadly defined as the ecumenical movement) from the rest, which, at most, is still engaged in charity work and determined by a charitable mentality. In terms of Rendtorff's vital distinction, a development involvement points to a new mode of *co-operation* and *integration* in the worldly sphere (see 1971: 102-103; 214-215)[9]. It presumes, contrary to the self-contained identity and own peculiar (theological/ecclesiastical) response to worldly problems sustained by a charitable involvement and mentality[10], a new *openness* and *willingness* (from the part of Christian theology and the churches) to engage in and identify with non-traditional, worldly spheres and identities[11].

This new development mode of engagement has to be determined by an awareness of a *limited* competence and a sense of *dependence* on the part of the churches and theology. According to Rendtorff, this sector's concern for development ought to be governed by the recognition that "[t]he complex, diverse, and far-reaching problems of development" are far beyond their competence to solve. Their experience in development, based on their new worldly engagement, has to bring them to the acknowledgement that any development work undertaken exclusively on their own

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[9] See again the initial introduction of these two concepts in footnote 11 in the introduction.

[10] This meaning or definition has been emphasised particularly under the second aspect of a charity mode of involvement discussed in chapter one (see 1.3.2).

[11] Here, in anticipation of the more elaborated discussion in chapter six of this study, reference can be made to the present author's MA Research Paper, *Towards a New Solidarity Praxis: Critical Reflection's on the Churches' Participation in World Transformation*, in which the above-mentioned idea of a new openness and willingness to engage and identify with non-traditional entities has been developed under the specific denominator of a 'new solidarity praxis'. Hence the idea stressed in this paper, with reference to, but also supplementary to, a contemporary ecumenical consciousness (see Swart 1997: 36-60; 88-89), that a meaningful contribution by the Christian churches to (world) social transformation (and by implication development) can only be realised by that sector's adaptation of such a praxis. It would most radically entail the adaptation to "a new universalism, a *new worldview*, a new commitment to be in solidarity with 'strangers' and erstwhile 'enemies'" (1997: 88-89), in the political, disciplinary (epistemological), ideological and strategic sense (cf. e.g. 1997: 1-6; 7-9; 61-62).

would "be either arrogant or naïve" and that they themselves can "play only a modest part" in the development task as a whole.

> Here if anywhere, the need is for cooperation with all social, national, and international bodies engaged in development work... The cooperation factor means that we cannot construct a theology of development from existing church dogmatics and doctrines alone. This factor imposes on us a new concept of theology, one which is, as it were, *supra-ecclesiastical.* (italics added) (1969: 210; see also 1971: 95)

2.3 Challenging mainstream secular development discourse

2.3.1 Gradual critical awareness

As can clearly be seen from a wider range of ecumenical writings on development, the recognition of the need for co-operation and integration in the earlier stage of the ecumenical development debate pointed out above, did not prevent representatives from that section of Christian theology and the churches to simultaneously criticise mainstream development thinking in a very definite way. It meant, beyond what a theological and church sector was capable of within traditional parameters, to speak a *proper*, critical discourse of development that would not accept the reigning (secular) point of view and practice of development out of hand (cf. Rendtorff 1971: 102-103; 1969: 214-215).

In the ecumenical development debate it was pointed out how the ecumenical movement soon adopted a rather critical stand vis-à-vis the dominant secular position. They started from a position of initial compliance with the mainstream notion of development through their conformation to the Rostowian model[12] of development (see Dickinson 1991: 268-269), their support to mainstream institutions of development (governments, UN agencies, international development organisations) (Itty 1974: 6-7; Dickinson 1975: 70), and their preoccupation with economic

[12] Referring to the ideas and theories captured in the 1960 development economics classic by Walter Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto*, this model dominated understanding of development during the earlier stages of official, secular development thinking. It emphasises, in simple terms, the necessity of a particular 'take-off' stage for traditional (undeveloped) societies to develop to a state of economic and social 'maturity' (see further e.g. Hettne 1995: 52-53; Oman and Wignaraja 1991: 10-13). Whereas the realisation of this 'take-off' stage requires a sufficient level of technical skills, financial support and economic organisation to be made available in the newly developing societies, it also explains the churches' understanding of their own task in development in the initial conformist stage mentioned above: to generate financial and other material resources to give to governments, secular agencies of development and technical specialists, whom they willingly entrust with the further task to put into operation the actual development process (see Dickinson 1991: 269; 1975: 70). (See furthermore also the discussion of the 'Pragmatic Debate' in the ecumenical development debate in chapter three.)

categories[13] in their own discussions and writings (see Itty 1974: 7). Gradually, the prevailing and growing *contradictions* in the economies of particularly the so-called developing countries[14] led individuals and institutions in this movement (e.g. the WCC) to adopt a more critical position towards the dominant paradigm. They had, in a relatively short period of intensive reflection on the theme of development, become quite critical of the whole equation of development with *economic development* and specifically with the economic growth paradigm upheld in mainstream circles. In the words of C. I. Itty, who wrote the following about the ecumenical churches' growing discontentment with the economic growth paradigm towards the end of the 1960s:

> The GNP-biased view of economic growth was criticized as it need not reflect any improvement in the standard of life of the poor masses. In fact, the experience of many countries in the Third World showed that, in spite of certain increases in GNP during the first development decade, the lot of the vast majority of the poor, instead of improving, was actually worsening. The increase in GNP largely benefited the already rich and the middle class in those countries, resulting in increased social inequalities and economic exploitation. (ibid)

While ecumenical scholars did not want to forsake the macro and structural aspect of development, a new emphasis was now placed on the *human* dimension in the ecumenical reconsideration of development. Constituting the guiding principle in

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[13] This point is made by C. I. Itty in his 1974 article in *The Ecumenical Review*. For this author economic categories clearly dominated the debate and the ensuing statements and reports emanating from ecumenical conferences and assemblies during the mid and late 1960s: the Church and Society Conference in Geneva (1966), the SODEPAX Conference at Beirut (1968), the WCC Fourth Assembly at Uppsala (1968). As pointed out by Itty, particularly with reference to the assembly at Uppsala, at this occasion the debate would in a rather confined way be concerned with economic growth amongst the poor people and nations of the world, which had to be achieved by far-reaching structural changes in the international economy and the responsibility of rich nations to provide better terms of trade, investment and appropriate technology (1974: 7). (See also, for instance, how, as a direct consequence of the Uppsala Assembly, the theme of 'Rich and Poor Nations' dominated in the Vol. 20, No. 4 issue of *The Ecumenical Review* (1968).)

[14] In his 1974 article in *The Ecumenical Review*, "The Limits-to-Growth Debate in Asian Perspective", Samuel Parmar listed the following contradictions within the economic growth paradigm:

(1) An increase in the extent and intensity of poverty despite the increase in national and per capita incomes.

(2) A shortage of foodgrains, rising prices of agricultural produce and greater inequality in rural areas concomitant with social discontent and unrest despite a successful green revolution.

(3) An increase in industrial unrest, unemployment and under-employment, prices of manufactured goods, unused capacity, power shortages and monopoly tendencies amidst impressive industrial progress.

(4) Continuing balance-of-payments deficits and debt-servicing despite a more than doubling in the value of annual exports.

(5) An increase in illiterate persons (70% of the Indian population for instance) despite educational expansion and a doubling in literacy (1974: 35-36).

many of the ecumenical writings on development since the early 1970s[15], this critical perspective wanted to challenge the anthropological and ideological basis of the mainstream secular paradigm that confines the meaning of human existence to economic categories[16]. It emphasised that development has to be understood in a *holistic* sense. It determined that an authentic development process has not only to consider *all* aspects of human well-being, but it also has to counter the factor of *exclusion* sustained by the economic growth paradigm (i.e. exclusion of the larger majority of people and nature). To quote in this regard Gnana Robinson's more recent formulation of ecumenical theology's critical position, vis-à-vis the economic growth paradigm:

> Development theories which are based merely on economic growth have to be subjected to criticism by Christian theology, which is... concerned for the holistic development of the whole human community. We are here concerned with the development of all people, all ethnic communities - black, white, brown and yellow, high-caste and low-caste, male and female. Holistic development focuses on the material, physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual needs of every person in the community, not only the present generation but also future generations. Stewardship of the resources of nature therefore becomes very important. Waste has to be avoided;

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[15] Highlighted in a number of publications directly associated with the institutional framework of the WCC, it should here be noted how the theme of human development would take central stage in writings from the southeast Asian representation of the ecumenical movement (see the main discussion on pp. 2 and 3 as well as footnotes 2, 7 and 8 in the introduction). In the former case see *Robinson 1994: 316-318; Mulholland 1988: 1-8, 18-30; De Santa Ana 1985: 103-104; Itty 1974: 6-11; Elliot 1971: 59-69; Land 1971: 2-35; Fernandes 1970: 228-239. In the latter case see Moghal 1993: 42-56; Thomas 1991: 35-39; Fernandes 1991: 300-305; Das 1987: 195-211; Jathanna 1987:218-234; Kurien 1987: 137-142; 1970: 9-15; Amalorpavadass 1972: 4-9, 19-21. [*While writing here in *The Ecumenical Review*, Robinson also descends from the latter southeast Asian context.]

[16] (1) Constituting the focus of critique in those writings mentioned in the previous footnote, the following additional reference list can be noted here of ecumenical writings on development in which a critical disposition towards economic biased and economic growth theories cross-cuts as a basic theme through the discussion (as in the case of the reference list in footnote 14, once again note the substantial number of authors from southeast Asian origin indicated in all cases with an asterisk): Dickinson 1991: 270-271; *Kurien 1987: 135-142; 1981: 29-45; Dickinson 1983: 48, 57-59; *Upadhyay 1980: 5-20; *Athreya 1980: 21-32; Dickinson 1975: 2-13, 68-71, 117; Linnenbrink 1975: 270-272; Pronk 1975: 16-23; *Parmar 1975: 8-15; *Parmar 1975a: 166-185; *1974: 33-52; Grant 1974: 22-29; *Song 1972: 55-62; *Kurien 1972: 15-24; *Thomas 1972: 36-41; *Parmar 1970: 16-33.

(2) If only in a footnote, at this point in the discussion, it can also be noted how ecumenical thinking shows a significant parallel with what is later identified in this study as the '*alternative* movement' in development. As well illustrated in the recent work of Raff Carmen, central in the alternative representation of development's critique of the mainstream development enterprise, is the latter's own particular reduplication of the Western value construct captured by the notion of *homo oeconomicus* (economic man). Development (or developmentalism) in this sense became the Third World parallel of Western economism, which in tandem with the latter "attempted to steer the course of a complex human organism, human society... by the sole macro-economic indicator of growthmanship" (1996: 194). (Also note here the formulation of the subtitle of Carmen's book, *Autonomous Development. Humanizing the Landscape: An Excursion into Radical Thinking and Practice*, which, as in the case of ecumenical theological thinking, emphasises the human aspect of development as the counterpoint of the mere economic notion of development. See in this regard Carmen (1996: 193-210).)

> and nothing should be done that will disturb the ecological balance of nature. (1994: 318)

However, in critical ecumenical thinking, the debate on development would *not* lose its economic angle. Important in this regard are those voices which at an early stage in the new period of critical thinking, warned against defining development too broadly as the total or integral liberation of the human person (see Itty 1974: 10; Thomas 1972: 36; Kurien 1972: 16; Elliot 1970: 21). While these voices[17], on the one hand, did not want to forsake the principles of a human development perspective, which naturally has to define the ultimate objective or outcome of an authentic development process, it was stressed, on the other hand, that such a large term of reference also robbed the word of any specificity and workable meaning (Elliot, ibid). The cutting edge of any liberating development process, as was determined in this counter perspective, had to remain the *economic* entry point of development. Development is specifically about "the conscious struggle against mass poverty". It is the want of a minimum of economic goods and services that holds people captured, causes their spiritual and human enslavement and remains the decisive link with the other dimensions of human well-being which are fundamental in the ecumenical concern for development. In the words of M. M. Thomas, a prominent ecumenical scholar from Indian descent:

> In defining Development too broadly as the total spiritual or integral liberation of man. This is no doubt the ultimate objective of every human activity. But Development service should emphasise specifically the spiritual and human enslavement which want of a minimum of economic goods and services (food, clothing and shelter, work, health and literacy) brings to men, women and children and it should emphasise the distinctive contribution liberation from such wants makes to the larger integral human liberation. No doubt, material poverty is closely linked with traditional religious ethos, value-systems, traditional social institutions and power-structures, and therefore cannot be fought in isolation from them... But the distinctiveness of Development service is that the conscious struggle against mass poverty, i.e. economic liberation, is the point of entry and should remain the conscious connecting link for our concern with these other aspects of human existence. Otherwise, everything which the Church has been

[17] Once again the formative influence of southeast Asian scholars, of persons like C. T. Kurien and M. M. Thomas, can be noted at this point. At first emphasised from within their very own Asian context (see Kurien 1972: 16; Thomas 1972: 36), it may be noted how someone like C. I. Itty (at the time director of CCPD) in his important 1974 article in *The Ecumenical Review*, used a speech by Thomas as a main source to set out the general ecumenical position which rendered pre-eminence to the economic entry point of development (see 1974: 10).

> doing and wants to do will be defined as Development service, and the cutting edge of our *economic* objective of development, viz. the elimination of mass poverty, will be lost. (Thomas 1972: 36)[18]

2.3.2 Three interrelated concepts

In the discussion so far, we have come to see how the critical ecumenical debate on development of the late 1960s and early 1970s has left us with the image of a debate that fluctuated between the two poles of economic versus human development (Itty 1974: 10). From this point onwards we can now proceed by pointing out how this debate would further refine itself around the three interrelated concepts of *economic growth*, *social justice* and *self-reliance*. Finding wider acceptance and first entering the ecumenical conceptual framework at the ecumenical consultation at Montreux in 1970[19], these three concepts rendered clearer structure and direction to ecumenical reflection and statements on development in the years to come[20] (Itty 1974: 8; see also De Santa Ana 1991: 316).

Through the influential thinking of Samuel Parmar[21], an Indian Professor of economics and a prominent member of CCPD in the 1970s, it was argued that economic growth remains fundamental to the idea of development. At the same time, this did not imply an acceptance of the idea of economic growth *per se*. It was stressed that the notions of social justice and self-reliance have to radically redefine the meaning of the former concept[22]. These two concepts have not only to render a qualitative meaning to economic growth, but have to bring to the fore the human, political and structural dimensions of an authentic development process. What follows is a synthesis that would now, from the starting point of Parmar's formative

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[18] It is the economic aspect of development, as Thomas meaningfully stated in a previous point in this article, through which development work has to be distinguished from the churches' charitable diakonia. Contrary to the latter involvement 'development' means *change* in the pattern of economic and social living which causes the poor to be poor (Thomas 1972: 35-36).

[19] In the continuing ecumenical development debate people would also come to refer to the latter three concepts as the 'Montreux triangle' (see e.g. Kurien 1974: 201).

[20] A reliance on these concepts are clearly still the case also in the 1990s, as reflected in one of the most recent publications on development in *The Ecumenical Review* by Gnana Robinson (see 1994: 318-320).

[21] The formative influence of Parmar is generally acknowledged in ecumenical literature on development (see e.g. Itty 1974: 8; Dickinson 1991: 270; 1975: 69; De Santa Ana 1991: 316).

[22] Or as otherwise stipulated in ecumenical understanding, economic growth has to become one of the *means* for promoting social justice and self-reliance (see De Santa Ana 1991: 316).

thinking, constitute the basic framework of a progressive ecumenical definition of development:

2.3.2.1 Economic growth

In the critical ecumenical definition of development, the principle of economic growth retained central importance. While this position had to be meaningfully informed by the 'limits-to-growth' debate, which challenges the living patterns and policies of the industrial or 'developed' nations (see Parmar 1974: 43), it rejected the prescription of a zero rate of growth for developing societies. This was stated by Parmar, with a specific view of the countries of Asia (and thus by implication also the rest of the developing world), as follows:

> From this angle, prescriptions of zero rate of growth and global equilibrium as made by the advocates of limits to growth are not an option for Asia. Even on the assumption that rich nations will impose cuts on their consumption and transfer surpluses to poor nations, a zero rate of growth is unacceptable to us. Short of a one-world government built on international economic justice, such transfers would institutionalize charity and dispossess our countries of their dignity and integrity. On the other hand, if a policy of zero rate of growth is accepted under existing politico-economic conditions, it would only perpetuate the status quo, leaving developing nations and deprived groups in developed nations to their miserable lot. In that case, even if industrial nations succeeded in overcoming their problems of pollution, ecological imbalance, etc., the environmental problem of poverty in developing nations could only become worse. (1974: 42)

Implicit in the above statement by Parmar, is the perception that the problem of environmental degradation in Third World societies was, contrary to its causes in the developed world, not caused by over-development or excessive growth, but by *a lack of sufficient growth.* In these societies the cause is *poverty*, the lack of goods and services that are basic to decent human living (see Parmar 1974: 41-42). It consequently called for development strategies focusing on the eradication of absolute poverty. This, however, could not be enough as people would still be living at a subsistence level. It (authentic strategies of development) ultimately needed to

operate with the yardstick of a 'desirable minimum' (Parmar 1975: 14-15), which clearly calls for some kind of growth (see Parmar 1974: 42)[23].

It can be said that the aspect of economic growth would, in the ecumenical definition, be best described by the juxtaposition of *qualitative versus quantitative growth.* According to this the conventional view of development is seen as reducing and limiting the enterprise of development to a quantitative approach to growth. Here the ecumenical point of view did not neglect the value of the important indices of development such as increases in GNP, per capita income, quantum of resources, size of investment and expansion of education and welfare facilities. It regarded these indices as meaningful indicators of general socio-economic improvement, but only up to a certain point. It maintained that they could still be misleading, for the reason that an approach inclined towards aggregates and averages often conceals the real situation (Parmar 1975: 8-9).

As the critical ecumenical position could be taken a step further, it pertained that the quantitative approach gives no real explanation for situations of gross absolute poverty prevailing in developing societies despite the realisation of growth. As such, this approach in actual fact contradicts (see Parmar 1974: 35-36)[24] the very meaning and goal of development:

> Development is a process by which poverty should be overcome. Therefore, if the fruits of growth reach the poor then it can be affirmed that development has taken place; otherwise not. (Parmar 1975: 9)

Related to the above-mentioned critique, is the fallacy of this approach to describe a whole country as 'poor' on the basis of per capita income. It constitutes a *generalisation* that neglects the existence of "small pockets of affluence" within poor countries which actually control the economic and political processes and accordingly appropriate the major share of production (ibid).

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[23] Following Mahatma Gandhi, Parmar also refers to the spiritual dimension of bread and work. Growth is accordingly to be seen as the positive realisation of the divine calling to eradicate poverty, inequality and exploitation, and hence, as a key element in the process of humanisation (see 1974: 42).

[24] See at this point footnote 14 in which Parmar's list of contradictions within the economic growth paradigm of development, is specifically mentioned.

These recognitions expose the great weakness and limitation of the quantitative approach. It is a *non-institutional* approach that neglects fundamental institutional and structural indicators. It does not take into account the factor of institutional and structural change that has to be implemented in favour of the poor. It omits the fundamental political factor that has to bring a *policy-making* process into place that can break through the power structures which sustain the negation and exploitation of the poor - despite the actual realisation of growth. As argued in the following perspective of a rectification of the quantitative approach, which anticipates much of the essence of the second and third principles of 'social justice' and 'self-reliance' in the ecumenical triangle of development discussed in this chapter:

> Policies of development should bring about structural change. The development process should not be seen merely as a techno-economic exercise for accumulation and deployment of resources. It should aim at fundamental changes in the overall social, economic, cultural and political institutions.
>
> Structural change calls for a change in values and institutions. Experiences of a number of developing countries show that, under the influence of the quantitative approach, development efforts have become adjuncts and allies of the *status quo*, both nationally and internationally. It is commonplace for spokesmen of developing countries to condemn neo-colonialism and the unjust structures of international economic and political relations that promote it. But it should not be forgotten that external influences are able to enter and permeate our economies through the connivance and cooperation of unjust internal structures. A quantitative approach bypass these fundamental issues of development. (Parmar 1975: 9-10)

However, the ecumenical critique of the quantitative approach to economic growth does not end here. Closely related to the third principle of 'self-reliance' discussed later on in this chapter, the conventional economic growth paradigm of development would be criticised for its *imitation* of developed countries, rather than taking the socio-economic realities of the developing world seriously. Concerning the impression of a consumerist, scientific and technological drive upon developing societies similar to what is taken as the norm in the developed societies (see Parmar 1975: 12), the ecumenical position pointed out the fallacy of conventional thinking claiming the possibility of poor nations to 'catch-up' with the rich. This notion of 'catching-up' with the rich nations captured the essence of the conventional way of thinking which emphasises that developing countries might be able to narrow the gap

between them and the developed world, if not reaching the same standard of living as the latter, with a high enough growth rate (see Parmar 1974: 38). Yet, in the ecumenical consciousness, this would be regarded as an *impossibility* that does not take into account the reality of limited resources, but also a more comprehensive perspective on human well-being. Parmar summarised this as follows:

> The fallacy of the "catching-up" concern in development has become apparent. The gap between rich and poor nations has widened. Preoccupation with keeping up with developed nations has made us neglect the more important question of reducing domestic inequalities. Development means to be like the developed nations. In terms of the resource availability in the world today this is not possible; moreover, human welfare has not been furthered by the path that the industrial nations have followed. Hence, both on grounds of feasibility and desirability, developing economies would be wise to charter a different course. (1975: 13)

This critique against the possibility of poor nations to 'catch up' with the rich, more specifically introduces the 'alternative' concept of 'qualitative growth'. Growth, as pointed out earlier, was seen as vital to development (Parmar 1975: 10) and as a means to overcome poverty. Yet, the rejection of zero rate growth did not imply that developing societies should pursue the same patterns and policies as that of the industrial countries. The quantitative aspects of development, such as concern about GNP, had to be subordinated to *qualitative* goals (Parmar 1974: 42).

As the focus of development strategies would now be on those *below the poverty line* (Parmar 1975: 14), it held that the contents of production ought to become more important than its quantum (Parmar 1975: 10). Determined further by the regulation of a 'permissible maximum' (as counterpoint of the already mentioned principle of a 'desirable minimum' and as laid down by a still very relevant 'limits-to-growth' debate) and the impediment of a *limited* resource base in developing societies (see Parmar 1975: 15; 1974: 44-45), this perspective on production would be articulated by the determination that an available resource base has to "be applied to the *production of essentials* and withdrawn from the less essential" (Parmar 1975: 14; italics added). In terms of a concrete policy framework this implies: (i) that slum clearance and low-cost housing will take priority over high-cost housing, (ii) coarse and medium cloth over fine textiles or synthetic materials, (iii) an increase in production of essential commodities over the expansion of a luxury goods sector, (iv) small irrigation

schemes which reach the low income groups over huge multipurpose projects, (v) training for basic rural health services over the concentration of medical facilities in urban areas, (vi) the increase in health and educational facilities over for example night clubs, and (vii) small viable projects over prestige projects (Parmar 1974: 37; 1975: 14).

From another angle, it can be said that the concept of qualitative growth views *cost-benefit* relations in social rather than in sectional terms. It determines that development has taken place in cases where social benefit exceeds social cost, where net economic welfare increases and the well-being of the poor has been enhanced. As such, it counters the generally narrow, micro view of cost and benefit in conventional growth strategies, where a project is regarded as beneficial if the value of output exceeds the cost of input. It determines that such strategies do not as a rule take into account the cost to society (as a qualitative approach does). It does not make an assessment of negative consequences such as industrial pollution, the spread of slums, the evils of urbanisation and industrial expansion (crime, alienation, the sub-culture of poverty, unemployment) and the export of exhaustible resources (Parmar 1975: 11).

Contrary to the quantitative approach to growth, it would be pointed out that the most significant feature of qualitative growth, is the fact that it brings into account cultural, human and social factors as fundamental co-determinants of welfare and development. This means a new consideration for the place of *values* as the ultimate factor in development, that is, values which through the attitudes of people, socio-cultural norms and ethical consciousness determine the nature of social institutions and structures (ibid). Expressed in the positive sense by a qualitative approach's emphasis on the essentiality of modest or simple *consumption* patterns in order to bring about an institutional and structural arrangement through which the poor might become the co-stakeholders of the limited resource base in developing countries (see Parmar 1974: 44-45; also 1975: 14-15), the institutional and structural aspect is, in the negative sense, indicated by a quantitative approach's undermining of the values that development stands for. Far from being a mere narrow-focused, a-structural and a-institutional strategy of development, the quantitative approach enhances a structural and institutional arrangement upheld by the values of excessive consumerism, profit

seeking and personal advantage at all cost, also including exploitation and aggrandisement (see Parmar 1975: 10). As described in the following quote:

> Many developing countries are facing an unprecedented upsurge of corruption, hoarding, profiteering, and illegal domestic and foreign transactions, which are eating at the very vitals of society. These reprehensible forces have found sustenance in the process of quantitative growth. While basic needs remain unfulfilled, the quest for luxuries gains momentum. There is a steady erosion of social commitment and responsibility. Such tendencies create values and social attitudes that jeopardize development. We have, therefore, to discard the narrow idea of a high rate of growth in favour of a value-oriented qualitative approach under which the struggle against poverty will from the outset be based on social justice and people's participation. (Parmar 1975: 11-12)

2.3.2.2 Social justice

The ecumenical definition of development would, as an important corollary of what has been spelled out under the first principle of qualitative 'economic growth', determine that the application of social justice has to "precede growth and be considered a necessary precondition for growth" (Parmar 1974: 43). In this sense, it involves the question of *value change* as much as that of *institutional transformation*, which go hand in hand as evident from the final section on 'economic growth' above (see Parmar 1975: 11). It is governed by the realisation that achievements of growth *coincide* with increased economic inequalities rather than vice versa. Increase in GNP is accordingly to be regarded as a delusive indicator as this ensures no automatic 'trickle-down' of the benefits of increased production to the poor[25] - an outcome clearly not brought about by a mere market mechanism, as the latter rather favours the higher-income groups of society possessing adequate purchasing power (Parmar 1975: 10; 1974: 39).

On the basis of the above critical assessment of existing institutional and policy regulation (predominantly against the interests and well-being of society's poor), a social justice framework in ecumenical development thinking emphasises the necessity of an alternative system of regulation. In this system the notion of *distribution* ought to be the governing principle. Based upon "the acceptance of egali-

[25] See also footnote 14 again and the quote on p. 40 in which the ecumenical movement's critical position towards the GNP-biased view of economic growth is formulated.

tarian values which...[are to] be realised in institutions relating to property, power and opportunity" (ibid), this denotes a system of institutional and policy regulation which has to work not only *towards* an increase in production to specifically meet the needs of those below the poverty line (thus giving expression to the priority placed on the production of essentials within the imposed parameters of a national maximum in consumption patterns), but also to *draw* this social group into the mainstream processes of production and give them a stake in growth (Parmar 1974: 40, 41).

In the ecumenical definition of development, this principle of *equitable* distribution also rejected the traditional view of welfare in which distribution is seen as a consequence of growth, and, consequently, in which production takes precedence over distribution (as the inverse would rather be a case of 'distributing poverty') (see Parmar 1974: 43). In this sense the ecumenical position denounced the mainstream rationale that policies of social justice would act as a disincentive to capital and enterprise. Here the counter-argument would be that it is rather the "stoppages and disruption of production caused by lack of people's participation [that] damage the interests of these factors more than a decrease in their immediate share" (1974: 41). It takes the stance that policies of social justice, of a more egalitarian pattern of distribution, will in the longer term become a *promotive* factor of growth rather than the opposite[26]:

> Most Asian economies have a small saving class and a large non-saving class. This results from maldistribution of income and is an obstacle to growth. Measures of social justice should, by drawing the non-saving class into the mainstream of production, redress the pattern of distribution, increase the productive capacity of the people and transform them into a saving class. Such measures should be looked upon

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[26] At this point a meaningful parallel can be drawn between ecumenical development thinking and South Africa's own Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). It is also stipulated in the RDP document that the integrated development process inherent to this programme, opposes the conventional approach that holds growth and development, or growth and redistribution, as processes that contradict each other. Similar to ecumenical thinking, it also goes on to proclaim a strategy of redistribution that should be regarded as basic to a process of inclusive growth and development for society at large:

> Growth - the measurable increase in the output of the modern industrial economy - is commonly seen as the priority that must precede development. Development is portrayed as a marginal effort of redistribution to areas of urban and rural poverty. In this view, development is a deduction from growth. The RDP breaks decisively with this approach. If growth is defined as an increase in output, then it is of course a basic goal. However, where that growth occurs, how sustainable it is, how it is distributed, the degree to which it contributes to building long-term productive capacity and human resource development, and what impact it has on the environment, are the crucial questions when considering reconstruction and development. The RDP integrates growth, development, reconstruction and redistribution into a unified programme. (ANC 1994: 6)

> as investment to make our human resources more efficient. That is how social justice can become a promoter of growth. (ibid)

With the preceding two paragraphs the notion of *participation* has been touched on as another fundamental determinant in the ecumenical understanding of development. More than indicating an important factor of production and growth (Parmar 1974: 40), the concept participation became the crucial *ethical* and *political* indicator in the ecumenical concern for social justice (see Dickinson 1991: 271; 1983: 56; also Parmar 1975: 15). It denotes the "visible element in the vision of an emergent society" (ibid; see also Arce Martinez 1978: 268). As an existing mainstream development reality is to be associated with the *lack* of the popular sector's participation in the decision-making processes of development, it denotes the distinct *repolitisation* of the development agenda vis-à-vis a mere economic and technocratic approach (Dickinson 1975: 70; Parmar 1975a: 170-171, 175-176; De Santa Ana 1975: 143-147). In the most profound sense, this meaning of participation introduces the leitmotif of '*solidarity* with the poor', which makes the churches' assistance of the poor in their (i.e. the poor's) *own* struggle for participation and liberation the most concrete and conscious expression of their (i.e. the churches') involvement in development (see Linnenbrink 1975: 271)[27]. As formulated by C. I. Itty, one of the prominent formulators of the ecumenical understanding of development:

> Development is essentially a people's struggle in which the poor and oppressed should be the main protagonists, the active agents and immediate beneficiaries. Therefore, the development process must be seen from the point of view of the poor and oppressed masses who are the subjects and not the objects of development. The role of the churches and Christian communities everywhere should be essentially supportive. (Itty quoted in Dickinson 1991: 272)

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[27] In his book entitled, *Poor, Yet Making Many Rich: The Poor as Agents of Creative Justice*, Richard Dickinson comes to indicate how the following *five* modes of being in solidarity with the poor could be identified in the work of the WCC:

(1) Helping the poor to meet their immediate needs through relief and modified project assistance (1983: 73; chap. 4).

(2) Development education or "conscious-raising for global justice" (1983: 73; chap. 5).

(3) Systemic (structural) analyses of basic social systems (1983: 73; chap. 6).

(4) Theological and ethical reflection on major cultural values and myths which govern societies, especially influential societies (1983: 73; chap. 7).

(5) Working alongside groups of the poor on local levels who are working towards their own emancipation (1983: 74; chap. 8).

At this point, of the churches' solidarity with the poor, the ecumenical understanding of development most clearly converges with the message of the *theology of liberation.* It was explicitly stipulated at the ecumenical consultation at Montreux in 1974[28] that 'liberation' represented the new word for 'development' (Linnenbrink 1975: 271). This word most powerfully expresses the ultimate goal of the alternative ecumenical understanding of development, and exposes the inherent biased nature of mainstream capitalist development, serving the status quo and sustaining the subservient position of dominance and dependence in which the poor find themselves. However, this is an understanding of development that does not simply denote the adoption of Marxist doctrine[29]: "it was more basically a result of the effort to reread the biblical materials and to see Christian theology with new eyes, from the angle of vision of the poor and oppressed, "from the underside of history""[30] (Dickinson 1983: 59). In terms of an authentic development praxis, it assumes that the poor will take "control of the process of development" (Linnenbrink 1975: 271). In this sense it also requalifies the mere supportive role of the churches indicated previously. In cases where the poor accept their lot of poverty and misery in passive resignation, the churches have the

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[28] This was the second ecumenical consultation at Montreux which meaningfully shaped the ecumenical understanding of development. It followed upon the first important consultation at Montreux already referred to earlier in the discussion (see p. 43).

[29] In their opposition to the reigning capitalist system ecumenical writers on development would come to express clear *socialist* sentiments. Richard Dickinson wrote in his entry on 'poverty' in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, that there was "an expressed conviction that some form of socialism... is the system most likely to overcome poverty". (See Sergio Arce Martinez's explicit equation of development with socialism in his 1978 article in *The Ecumenical Review* (Vol. 30, No. 3)). Yet, as the description by Dickinson furthermore suggests, in the larger corpus of ecumenical literature a position more sophisticated than a mere identification with socialism is to be encountered. Pointing out "the failure of both capitalism and communism", it is a position that rather adopts the fuller and more sophisticated language of what might be called "(a)n alternative "third way"" - a concept or theme that would at an earlier stage be informed by the ecumenical notion of 'a responsible society' (which emphasises political and economic freedom and responsibility), but later also by the still fuller ecumenical description of a 'just, participatory and sustainable society' (which highlights material well-being, political participation and ecological sanity) (1991: 808).

[30] In a southeast Asian context this theological underpinning of development would significantly come to be known as 'A Theology of the People' or *minjung* theology, meaning theology of alienated or marginalised people (Das 1987: 211-216; also see the numerous references to such theological expression in footnotes 25-32 in this section of the discussion by Das). In this theological expression, another writer from India meaningfully wrote that theology is not the main subject of people's struggle for liberation, but justice is. It involves "the struggle of the people, especially the struggle of the poor, for their life". It is therefore not the task of theologians to theologise this struggle, as theirs could, at most, be a supportive one:

> It is not we who should theologise this struggle. God himself has chosen sides. He has chosen to liberate the poor by delivering them from their misery and marginality, and to liberate the rich by bringing them down from their thrones. We are invited to take the side of the poor, to claim solidarity with them in their struggle. (Mar Polouse 1983: 88)

clear task of *conscientisation*[31]. In the words of Itty, they have the task of assisting "the masses to recognize the roots of their plight, to acquire a new awareness of themselves and the possibilities for changing their situation" (Itty quoted in Dickinson 1991: 272).

For the churches, this identification of the churches with the poor, in their struggle for development, at the same time implies an unequivocal *self-critique*. It implies the conscious and deliberate action of the churches to free themselves from the structures of wealth and power in which they might find themselves entangled (see Linnenbrink 1975: 272). It assumes the extension of an authentic ecumenical development involvement to direct its role of conscientisation *to the churches and Christians living in the rich industrial states* (Linnenbrink 1975: 273) (but, one may add, which does not omit their counterparts in developing countries). It means bringing rich Christians and churches to the point of critically self-examining their own power base and ideological self-interests from which they render development aid (see Linnenbrink 1975: 273-274).

In conclusion, this task of conscientisation has to be seen as the "constitutive factor for the unity of the Church" (Linnenbrink 1975: 274). It would be stressed in the ecumenical consciousness that development was only authentic where it *unifies* rich and poor around the single denominator of a "*Church of the poor, a poor Church*" (see Linnenbrink 1975: 272; italics retained); where it rules out any "neutral, arbitrator's rôle... from both oppressed and oppressors" and where it involves "taking an unequivocal stand on the side of the oppressed and the disinherited whenever they are denied the social, economic and political conditions necessary for effective participation in the social processes of development and decision-making" (Linnenbrink 1975: 274).

2.3.2.3 Self-reliance

In the ecumenical consciousness, the *structural* and *policy-making* element of an authentic development process is most clearly described by the third determinant concept of self-reliance. Here the deficiency of mainstream dominant strategies to

[31] Cf. the concurrence between this perspective on conscientisation, as defined in the following two paragraphs below, and the perspectives on conscientisation in chapter three of this study, i.e. at the end of 3.2.2 and especially in 3.3.2.

bring about a process of authentic development, was pointed out. It was stressed that such strategies do not take the own peculiar situation of developing countries into account and that it remains a structural and policy framework from outside that is being *imposed* upon these societies. As this is most clearly to be recognised in the problem of modern technology as a strategy for developing societies, such a technological arrangement *conforms* to the pattern of supply in industrial nations. It is capital-intensive and labour-saving, while economic conditions in developing societies are very different. In these societies the situation is one of *a scarcity of capital and a relative abundance of labour*. Consequently, the influx of capital-intensive technology *causes* the distortion of the patterns of utilisation in these societies. It uses more of what these societies lack and less of what they actually possess, especially labour (Parmar 1974: 45-46).

In the ecumenical perspective, the most suitable technological arrangement could (to follow Samuel Parmar) best be described as an *intermediate technology*. Here the prevalent quest has to be for a *labour-using* technology (contrary to a labour-saving one) which takes into account the *own* socio-economic realities and conditions of developing countries. In spite of the fact that the system of modern technology by and large represents the opposite of such a (labour-using) technological arrangement, this perspective would not be inimical to the adoption of a modern technological arrangement. In practice it proposes the implementation of "a politico-economic system that would allow for the co-existence of two basically divergent technologies". It proposes the co-existence of a capital-intensive system of technology utilised by a smaller sector of society[32] while the rest of the economy is geared towards intermediate technology. As the essence of such structural and policy regulation is defined:

> We need not shy away from the dualism inherent in a two-technologies social system. Economic dualism has been a characteristic of many Asian countries. It still continues. A small organized sector exists alongside a large traditional sector. Of course, in the

[32] In this perspective the defence sector and part of the industrial sector are identified as utilisers of capital-intensive technology. Yet, this statement can be regarded as a contradiction in terms, particularly with regard to the former sector, as it is acknowledged that the real solution to the problem of development entails the issues of peace and disarmament. As the notion of intermediate technology highlights the violent nature of modern technology upon human beings and nature (see in the main section of the discussion), it points to disarmament and anti-militarism as integral parts of an authentic development strategy (see Parmar 1974: 48).

> past the former has exploited the latter and contributed to underdevelopment and inequality. An important aim of developmental efforts is thus to end this kind of dualism. Technological dualism could also present similar dangers, with the modern sector dominating the one which uses intermediate technology. To safeguard against such possibilities it would be necessary to undergird any experiments in two-tier technology by appropriate political and ideological supports. (1974: 47-48)

In the above description the predominant orientation of an intermediate technological arrangement for traditional or indigenous societies is clearly spelled out, but also the definite *political* determination thereof[33], that is that this kind of society and arrangement have to be safe-guarded from exploitation and domination by the dominant modern sector through a system of clear structural and policy regulation. This does not only entail a fundamental perspective on employment and labour (that is the aspect already pointed out), but it also considers the *environmental* and *limits-to-growth* factor. While the ecumenical perspective on development emphasised the need for a particular measure of qualitative economic growth as indicated earlier, it simultaneously took full consideration of the limits-to-growth debate and ultimately the necessity for a *zero rate* of growth in the economic arrangement as this is the only safeguard against environmental and for that matter, human destruction. Compelling the devise of an intermediate technology, this perspective furthermore states:

> Intermediate technology can maintain harmony between man and nature. In that case it will not exploit nature as advanced technology is doing. It could, therefore, be considered non-violent in character. Precisely for that reason it can develop and flourish in a climate of peace. The limits-to-growth discussion is of great significance in this context. It exposes the rapacious nature of technology. The suggestion of zero rate of growth and equilibrium, if put into practice, would reduce the exploitative attributes of technology and divest it of its inherent violence. (Parmar 1974: 48-49)

Related to the problem of technology, the ecumenical development perspective of self-reliance also extended to the debate on *trade*. Existing trade arrangements between developing and developed nations, which are upheld in this perspective, had to be regarded as part and parcel of the problem of mainstream development. These

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[33] Thus, as under the heading of economic justice (see 2.3.2.2), the inherent political dimension or nature of an authentic development practice once again surfaces.

existing arrangements had to be seen in a historical light as the preservation of relationships from the time of colonial domination by which "capital and technique have moved from the dominant nations into the weaker ones to foist on the latter a pattern of specialization and trade that would serve the interest of the former" (Parmar 1974: 50). As "a double movement of factors" is basic to this process leading to the constant draining of labour and raw materials out of the so-called developing societies to serve as inputs to the dominant countries, it reflects "the prevalent trade policy of export promotion and import substitution" in the contemporary context. Its objective is aimed at achieving self-reliance in the foreign exchange sector (Parmar 1974: 50-51). In terms of the prevalent predisposition to imitate the dominant countries in all aspects and sectors, the rationale is to achieve the desired balance in the foreign exchange budget through enough export, to import the capital, goods and services necessary for the growth of an own modern, industrialised sector without external financial assistance[34] (see Parmar 1974: 36-37, 51).

In the ecumenical debate on trade, based on the above critical perspective, "change in the existing pattern of international division of labour, terms of trade, and trade policies" was, however, demanded (Parmar 1974: 51). Development would here take on the clear meaning of *structural* reform. It requires that "reforms of the *international* economic system [are] just as imperative as those required within the poor countries and within the developed countries" (Grant 1974: 26, 27). As this once again introduces the notion of justice, "(i)ts expression would be social justice in the domestic economy and international economic justice in the world economy" (Parmar 1974: 52). In terms of existing socio-economic relations, it implies a global structural and policy regulation in which primacy is given to the interests of the weaker sections, a policy according to which the industrial nations would "give up their present hold on the world's resources" (ibid).

Yet, in the ecumenical development debate, the perspective on alternative trade regulations and structures would undergo further deeper qualification by means of the

[34] In his exposition Parmar called this kind of autonomy a "narrow, functional" self-reliance, as it regards the "blind imitation" of the "concepts and policies borrowed from industrial countries" a virtue and necessity (1974: 36). Hence the clear linkage between the debates on technology and trade in the critical ecumenical perspective at this point.

notion of self-reliance. It would go beyond the mere emphasis on just and fair international economic relations. It would propagate the principle of *far less trade*. However, by this the ecumenical perspective did *not* imply self-sufficiency, autarchy or delinking (Robinson 1994: 320; Das 1987: 206; Dickinson 1983: 32). As this concerns the question of trade and the interrelated quest for intermediate or appropriate technology, the ecumenical perspective wanted rather to apply explicit *qualitative* consideration of the nature of *what* is exported and imported (Parmar 1974: 50). The concern would here be with redressing the serious drain of scarce resources induced by a current export policy, because this poses the real danger of their depletion in the long term at the cost of local people striving for self-reliance (ibid).

However, self-reliance was not only to be seen as an economic concept, but had to be applied to *the whole of a society and culture*. It relates to the collective cultural *psyche* of a people and to *their* liberation from the cultural imperialism imposed on them by the political, economic and technological (Western) structures and powers of domination (Dickinson 1983: 32-33). Consistent with the denial of autarchy or self-sufficiency as a viable strategic option, self-reliance implies a strategy of development which "would not eliminate all vertical dependencies". It would rather seek to minimise these vertical dependencies as far as possible (Dickinson 1983: 33). The ecumenical understanding would relate here to a meaning expressed in the 1974-Cocoyoc Declaration[35], whereby a self-reliant development means a new affirmation of a people's *self-confidence*; of reliance primarily on their own resources, human and natural, and on their capacity for autonomous goal-setting and decision-making. "It excludes dependence on outside influences and powers that can be converted into political pressure." (Robinson 1994: 320)

Self-reliance, in the ecumenical understanding, was all about affirming a local people's *self-respect* and *dignity* (Das 1987: 206). Formulated differently, it can be said that a development strategy of self-reliance indicates a fundamental reorientation 'from below' (see Fernandes 1991: 303-304). It denotes the structural and policy

[35] Adopted by an United Nations symposium in 1974 in Mexico (see Robinson 1994: 320).

regulation to ensure the authentic participation of a local people[36]. As this carries an explicit social and cultural meaning, it means that the process of development would evolve into an "indigenous movement for development" (Das 1987: 207). It opts, on the broad socio-economic level, "for local grassroots initiative and innovation yielding results compatible with local conditions, tastes and culture" (Dickinson 1983: 33).

It is appropriate to conclude here that much of what has been described above, particularly under the rubric of self-reliance, captures the essence of a *critical modernisation* perspective in the ecumenical debate on development. Not surprisingly, it would be made clear by writers from the southeast Asian representation of this debate[37] that this perspective does *not* imply an anti-modernist approach. Congruent with what has been stated above, it does *not* mean a delinking from a modernist world. It wants rather to emphasise that modernisation is not a self-evident process that can mechanically be equated with Westernisation (Das 1987: 207).

Self-reliance, in the critical ecumenical perspective, would rather come to be associated with what M. M. Thomas called the "space and support in the global processes of modernisation for the Third World's own experiments" (1991: 33). Self-reliance accordingly comes to stand for a new meaning of modernisation, one in which the element of diversification is central. It denotes the means by which to bring into the process of development traditional or indigenous society's contribution towards bringing about a new pattern of modernisation that needs "to develop not only an ideological alternative to Capitalism and Communism but also an alternative technology appropriate to a human mode of modernisation" (Thomas 1991: 37). If only called traditional society for the sake of distinguishing it from what can be called Western modernisation, we may here conclude with the following appreciation by Thomas of the ideological, value, spiritual and social contribution which those sections of humanity have to make to a new human mode of modernisation (i.e. a gen-

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[36] At this point the interrelatedness of self-reliance with the second fundamental concept of social justice can be clearly drawn. As the notion of participation was indicated as inherent to the meaning of social justice earlier in our discussion (see on p. 50), self-reliance here comes to represent the important concept to further qualify the meaning of social justice and, for that matter, the notion of participation.

[37] See for instance Robinson (1994: 317-320), Moghal (1993: 48-51), Thomas (1991: 31-39), Das (1987: 201-211), Song (1972: 58-64).

eral mode of social existence applicable to all of humanity):

> It seems to me that all these call for a philosophy of modernisation which goes beyond the materialistic worldview and respects the organic and spiritual dimensions of human community life. Actually all religions and cultural traditions of the Third World are quite sensitive to these dimensions through their reverence for nature and concern for the primary communities like the family; and therefore any emerging new socialism needs to assimilate some of the traditional spirit and values in their renewed form. This will also help to give modernisation indigenous cultural roots, without which it often brings demoralisation. (1991: 38)

2.4 Beyond charity

In the foregoing discussion the broad parameters of the ecumenical discourse on development, as it originated and reached a level of sophistication from a particular point in time onwards, has been set out. Having indicated how this discourse, from an early stage in its development, pretended to critically challenge both a church sector in general and a secular development discourse and practice, a point has now been reached where we can reconsider, in a better way, the meaning of that discourse in the light of the definitions of charity in the previous chapter[38].

It should be concluded that the exercise undertaken in this chapter, to synthesise the ecumenical discourse on development, cannot but lead us to extract a positive meaning from *that* discourse in the view of the critical position taken in the previous chapter. If only denoting a particular (progressive) discourse, which as the critical perspective in the next chapter will aim to make clear, *not necessarily implies a corresponding progressive praxis*, a meaning of theological-ecclesiastical discourse can be extracted here which has clearly progressed beyond the first stage in the growth of awareness of contemporary social and economic problems (as described in the previous chapter).

A *development* discourse, as evident in the ecumenical understanding, would clearly not take the existing order of things at face value - as is the case of a charitable mode of understanding. It exceeded the boundaries of traditional theological and ecclesiastical language and adopted a distinct critical *social theoretical* content.

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[38] We here refer to the three definitions or statements on charity stipulated in the previous chapter as the critical point of reference for evaluating the ecumenical discourse on development.

Taking on a far more anonymous identity in this sense (by speaking to a far greater extent a development discourse proper and falling back far less onto traditional theological and ecclesiastical metaphors), it is nonetheless a discourse profoundly *normative* in nature. In other words, it displays a clear *ethico-political* agenda, articulating through its central concepts of (qualitative) economic growth, social justice and self-reliance, a *vision* of definite structural and policy change if the chronic problems of poverty, inequality and environmental degradation are to be redressed in a sufficient and satisfactory way.

In the very normative and ethico-political sense just mentioned, the ecumenical discourse on development could perhaps be best described as a discourse *from below*, which has made the poor, the environment, but also human (holistic) well-being in general, its central concern. It has come to regard the latter category as a concern or perspective that opposes the dominant ideology from above's imposition of a narrow-minded economic meaning onto human well-being. It has come to rethink structures and policy - economic, political and social - to enable poor and hitherto marginalised societies and people, to become centres of direct *participation*, to sustain a new responsible *stewardship of nature* and to foster *holistic well-being* of human persons in general.

As a discourse or perspective from below we have come to see how the political term of *distribution* became central to ecumenical understanding, that is, distribution of property, power and opportunity. Thus, as the central concept of a *politicised* ecumenical development understanding, it is the principle of distribution that would, from an ecumenical point of view, give clear guidance about the kind of structural and policy change that ought to take place within and amongst nations.

As a discourse from below, we have come to see how the ecumenical perspective also introduced a particular perspective on *labour* into the framework of development, which as indicated in the previous chapter, is absent in a charitable mode of understanding. The ecumenical development perspective, as such, has taken on a clear *social* meaning by criticising the salient feature of modern technological devices to exclude a large majority of the world's population (especially those in the so-called Third World) from meaningful and creative labour. It has drawn into the semantic constellation of development the notion of a *labour-using* technology, a kind of device

that, in an alternative political and economic consciousness, puts far greater value on the contribution of indigenous culture and knowledge to the problem of labour. As an ecological and environmental consideration also notably figures here, it has, under the rubric of an intermediate technology, come to emphasise the need for the steering of a collective human energy towards a technological device, conducive to environmental and human social well-being (meaning in the latter case creative and participatory human beings).

It can be said that an ecumenical development discourse has clearly distinguished itself as an exponent of an *alternative development* corpus. It has come to denote an *idea movement* as much as indicating an actual theory-praxis corpus to intervene in existing social, political and economic arrangements to enhance human socio-economic well-being. It has come to constitute a value-centred and normative discourse *challenging* existing structural and policy arrangements. Moreover, it has incorporated an *ideological* meaning critically disposed towards modernist society in terms of structure, policy and worldview. As this meaning of development clearly separates itself from the meaning of charity, development, as a discourse composed of structural, normative and ideological meaning, ought to appeal in the ecumenical understanding to the *conscience* of *both* the poor and the rich. For the poor, development ought to mean liberation from their own passivity and oppression, the ability to recognise the nature of their predicament, and the confidence and will to become the subjects of their *own* struggle for emancipation and development. For the rich, again, it ought to mean the adoption of a critical self-awareness, the ability to recognise their own psychological comfort and position of power (to use the description applied in the previous chapter) and the moral will to creatively and constructively engage on a path of liberation of themselves *and* their poor fellow human beings.

We should end our positive assessment of the ecumenical development discourse at this point of referring to development (in terms of it being an intellectual enterprise) as a comprehensive set of normative, ideological- and socio-critical ideas - an idea movement. In the next chapter we will focus more specifically on that particular offshoot of the ecumenical development debate that has already been identified in this study as the 'Pragmatic Debate'. We will come to see how this debate would

juxtapose a progressive discourse, i.e. a set of normative, challenging ideas, with the *reality* of an actual (conservative) 'development' praxis. It will bring us back to what is, from the very outset in the next chapter, referred to as the *return to a basic consideration*, the question of how a prevailing social praxis of the churches has responded to the challenge of a progressive development discourse, essentially an idea movement.

CHAPTER THREE

THE PRAGMATIC DEBATE

3.1 Introduction

> Indeed there is not just one spectrum; rather there is a family of spectra. For example, there is a range of opinion that stretches from the cautious operational agencies whose major focus is still in works of a caritative nature, to the analytical, social science trained Christian who takes a much more 'progressive' view of the nature of poverty and the Church's role in eradicating it.
>
> ...we are likely to find a large discontinuity between, let us say, the major papers at a World of Council of Churches conference on the one hand, and the working hypothesis of a Church development agency in the US or the UK or Germany on the other... Put concretely, we should not regard WCC statements (and a *fortiori* consultation papers) as descriptive of how Church development activists thought - or think.
>
> ...it comes as no surprise to find formal declarations and publications from the Church - both Protestant and Catholic - using a different language and addressing a different problem to that of the Church development agencies on the ground. To put it crudely, a gap exists between the rhetoric of Church's *thinking* bodies and the actions of the Church's acting bodies. (Charles Elliot 1987: 29-30)

In the above extract from Charles Elliot's book, *Comfortable Compassion? Poverty, Power, and the Church*, a significant continuation can be found of what this author at an earlier stage of the ecumenical development debate, came to label as "The pragmatic debate"[1]. As suggested in this extract, through the latter debate a distinct tension would be introduced in the larger ecumenical development debate between theory and praxis, between theological and ecclesiastical development *discourse* as conceptualised in the realm of the World Council of Churches (WCC) on the one hand, and what the churches and their related bodies were in actual fact *doing* in the area of development, on the other (i.e. development work being done on the ground by a wider and diversified church sector).

It can be said that the pragmatic debate indicates the return to *a basic consideration.* It poses the question whether the churches' so-called development activities do in fact articulate something different from the works of charity of old. As the churches and

[1] This name constitutes the heading of the final chapter of Elliot's book, *The Development Debate*, which was published in 1971.

church-related development agencies are now (i.e. in the new dispensation of development) engaged in various kinds of development *projects*, by which they want to emulate the reigning secular views and models of development[2], the question is asked in the pragmatic debate whether such a 'development' engagement does in fact represent a different ideological, operational and relational framework from the works of charity in which the churches were previously involved[3]. Or, to take it a step further, it is asked in this debate whether the development praxis of the churches does in fact reflect the critical development discourse that has emerged in the theoretical reflections of Christian theology and the churches (such as we have come to witness in the previous chapter).

Apart from institutions for service and charity[4], C. T. Kurien, another eminent Indian economic scholar participating in the ecumenical development debate, wrote in his 1974 reflection on the theme of "The Church and Development"[5], the churches' response to the challenge of development also involved their sponsoring of *projects* specifically intended to increase productivity, such as in agriculture. Numerous schemes to provide assistance to small farmers and to encourage farming in drought-ridden areas, would be undertaken by church-related agencies. In the domain of education, new emphasis was placed on technical and vocational training. In the field of health, some Christian hospitals were also taking up community health as a matter of high priority. In a general socio-economic sense, various forms of village upliftment projects and community development schemes became part of the churches' societal service (1974: 202-203).

Having mentioned the above modes of project engagement by the churches, Kurien

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[2] As will be pointed out in more detail under the sub-heading of the 'radical' pragmatic debate (3.3) in this chapter, this is a point of view highlighted and criticised by Charles Elliot in his above-mentioned book, *Comfortable Compassion?*

[3] While no pertinent reference is made in the pragmatic debate to the work explored in chapter one of this study, the theme of charity constitutes the clear backdrop in this debate. In anticipation of the discussion of the 'radical' pragmatic debate mentioned in the previous footnote, see how a reference to the charity work of the Christian missionaries constitutes the clear point of departure in the discussions of the pragmatic debate by Charles Elliot (1987: 17-25; 1971: 110-113) and C. T. Kurien (1974: 201-202).

[4] In the pragmatic debate 'charity' not only indicates a historical mode of social engagement by the churches (with reference to the previous footnote), but also an *ongoing* mode of engagement up to the present, paralleling and overlapping with a so-called development involvement by this sector. See in this regard the first chapter of Charles Elliot's *Comfortable Compassion?* (1987: 9-16).

[5] This is the topic of the postscript in Kurien's book, *Poverty and Development*, which was published in 1974.

conceded that some of these projects could be regarded as "of a pioneering nature and that most of them represented new areas of service for the church" (1974: 203). Yet, this author simultaneously qualified such observation by questioning the presupposition that most of the churches' projects were reflecting the progressive principles which characterise the theological-ecclesiastical discourse on development.

> But it is very doubtful whether these [projects] measure up to the standards of self-reliance and social justice that the church has accepted as new dimensions in development. (ibid)

In the substantiation of his argument, and by referring particularly to the case of India, Kurien pointed to the *external* factor characterising the development work of the churches. This was, according to him, first of all illustrated by the fact that this work reflects an outside process in which the initiative comes from donor churches *abroad* and in which the local churches and their agencies are little more than local agents and administrators "of many overseas contributing churches and bodies". Consequently, it would in this sense be possible to say "that many 'development projects' were initiated solely because finances from outside were readily available" (ibid).

Not less significant is a second meaning. While it could be said that numerous individuals and special agencies were involved in the designing and execution of the projects (and one presumes here also local Christians), the actual state of affairs was that most churches and the majority of their members had no ownership of these development activities, as they were neither aware nor involved with them. In the words of Kurien:

> Most of the so-called 'church development projects' did not have any contacts with the churches and had little to do with development except the names that they carried. They have also created the impression that dependence on foreign resources is the easiest way to achieve development. (ibid)

As Kurien ultimately concluded, projects of the above-mentioned kind could hardly be regarded as making a positive contribution to the cause of social justice. Already sug-

gested by the above-mentioned observations[6], this was in a further interrelated way reflected by the nature and impact of the churches' projects. Their impact had to be seen as quantitatively very *limited* compared to the vast problems of poverty, hunger and unemployment inherent to rural areas. By their very nature, most of the projects were also incapable of reaching the poorest sections of the population, namely, the landless agricultural labourers in the rural areas and the destitute in the cities. In all, these projects, as part of a larger collective effort, had fallen short of bringing about the fundamental structural changes that are required to alter the livelihoods of the latter social groupings on a long-term basis:

> ...it is becoming increasingly clear that justice for these sections calls for radical changes in our basic socio-economic structure and not just a few projects here and there, however thorough and adequate they may be as far as projects go. (1974: 203-204)

With the above perspectives from the writings of Elliot and Kurien, we are introduced to the scope and contents of the pragmatic debate. Also referred to as the 'project debate', we may recognise through the above brief exploration how it is, in particular, through this debate that fundamental questions have been posed with regard to the development praxis of the churches in the wake of an apparent critical ecumenical development discourse. If only undertaken by a very small group of writers in the ecumenical development debate[7], and if already conveyed to some degree in this introductory discussion, the aim in the rest of this chapter will be to explore the meaning of the pragmatic debate. This will be done by distinguishing between a *moderate* and *radical* account of the pragmatic debate. Pointing out how each account has, in its own way, come to call for a rethinking and reorientation of the churches' involvement in development, the discussion will conclude by considering the way in which the pragmatic debate represents the ambivalent point of both an *impasse* and *renewal* in the ecumenical development debate.

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[6] It can be said that the above-mentioned external factor (in the twofold sense mentioned) largely neglected the aspects of *participation* and *liberation* (of the local people and the poor) that were recognised in critical ecumenical development discourse as inherent to the central principle of social justice (see pp. 51-53 of this study).

[7] Amongst this small group of writers and as reflected by our discussion of the 'radical' pragmatic debate in this chapter, Charles Elliot and C. T. Kurien would distinguish themselves as representing the most critical position.

3.2 The 'moderate' pragmatic debate

3.2.1 Historical review

In the few historical accounts to our disposal, it is pointed out how the churches' development involvement through projects would be under continual criticism and review (Dickinson 1983: 77; also Itty 1974: 11). In his concise but meaningful overview of the earlier period of project involvement, C. I. Itty, for instance, referred to "several new sets of criteria for projects" (ibid) that had been devised from an early period in the realm of the WCC[8]. Mentioning the meaningful attempts that were made in this regard at a consultation sponsored by the WCC's Division on Interchurch Aid, Refugee and World Service at Swanwick in 1967, Itty indicated the contribution that were made at the Council's Fourth Assembly at Uppsala in 1968. Amongst a comprehensive list of *new criteria* devised at this occasion, the following, according to him, deserved special mention:

> —Projects which aim at the 'root causes' of underdevelopment rather than treating its symptoms;
>
> —Projects which have a comprehensive character, which attack the diverse and relative problems of a community in a coordinated and strategic manner;
>
> —Projects which arise out of long-range planning;
>
> —Projects which complement national or governmental planning;
>
> —Projects which reflect technical viability and competence. (ibid)

Itty indicated that it was at the Uppsala Assembly that the new emphasis on structures highlighted at the 1966 Church and Society Conference[9], was sustained[10]. It would uphold the latter conference's view that structural factor's are to be seen as the primary cause for underdevelopment in world society. It also reflected in its own discussions the ecumenical development debate's increasing juxtaposition of the churches' development involvement through *micro projects* (also called the 'project

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[8] Itty (1974: 11) pointed out how a special body was established in 1965 within the WCC to assist churches to meet the criteria set by the Council and its working bodies. Initially called the Committee on Specialised Assistance to Social Projects (SASP), this body later became the Advisory Committee on Technical Services (ACTS).

[9] See again the beginning of this study (page 1 and footnote 1) where the central place of this conference in the ecumenical debate is indicated.

[10] At this point Itty referred to the Uppsala Assembly's adherence to the pronouncement of Samuel Parmar, who declared that development in fact means *disorder* and *revolution*, that is, a dynamic process that "changes existing social and economic relationships, breaks up old institutions to create new, brings about radical alterations in the values and structures of society" (1974: 12).

system') against what was seen as the *macro structural* factor in development (i.e. micro projects versus macro structures)[11] (Itty 1974: 11-12). Yet, and this is the central point to be made in what we have come to recognise as the 'moderate' pragmatic debate, in spite of the prominent place given to the churches' participation in structural changes at Uppsala, this assembly would nevertheless *maintain the value of the project approach on the local level*[12]. As Itty quoted from the document, *Uppsala 68 Speaks*, which clearly illustrates the dual position taken at Uppsala (i.e. one which maintains the value of the churches' development projects):

> The churches are already engaged in mission and service projects for economic and social development and some of these resources could be used strategically on a priority basis for pioneer or demonstrative projects as an important response to the most acute needs of specific peoples and areas. (1974: 12)

Articulating a central aspect of the 'moderate' pragmatic debate, it is proclaimed in this extract, that there is still a meaningful place for the project system besides a more overt structural approach to development. It suggests that there is the remaining factor of people and local societies' fundamental needs, that cannot be neglected amidst the concentrated participation in programmes for structural change. In this light the development projects of the churches are to be positively viewed as serving as a meaningful and qualitative effort to meet these needs.

In the 1968 publication by Richard Dickinson, *Line and Plummet: The Churches and Development*, we can find a further elaboration of precisely this line of thinking. In this work, that served as an important preparatory document for the discussions on development at Uppsala (see Lacey 1968: 7), Dickinson defended the churches' project system. Sustaining in his own argumentation the tension between the project and structural approaches, or what he in the case of the latter also called "preventive work" (see 1968: 78-79), Dickinson proclaimed that this could be regarded as a most

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[11] In radical circles in the ecumenical movement in the early 1970s, as Itty pointed out, the criticism of the project approach would in fact reach the point of its complete rejection, most notably by Christians in Latin America belonging to the 'structuralist' school of thought. As source Itty in this regard referred to: "A Pastoral Letter from Concerned US Missionaries in Chile", October 1972, CCPD documents No. 2, Churches and Development (see 1974: 12, footnote 24).

[12] A position, it may be observed, which clearly distinguished itself from more 'radical' positions such as that mentioned in the previous footnote.

creative tension. From the dynamics of such tension new modes of creative action could be developed by the churches:

> But there is a growing uncertainty about the adequacy of traditional involvement of churches in development and social service projects. Many Christians today ask whether, given the radically new environment of the 1960's, a new approach is not demanded. We believe that this is a most significant doubt, laden with potential creativity as Christians seek new and more effective forms of service. (1968: 76)

Dickinson argued that what was required was not the abolishment of projects, but rather the need to *clarify* and *re-interpret* the development objectives of the churches, and especially also to bring an administrative machinery into place that expresses and achieves these objectives (ibid). Most fundamentally in this regard, is the challenge to more fully relate the churches' service efforts to the *Christian ethos*. Rather than discriminating between different modes of action, it is this ethos which in fact upholds the belief that *all* aspects of human life are potential "expressions of God's redeeming action, and... important for individual fulfilment and the achievement of a fuller *koinonia*" (1968: 77). What matters to Christians, is all activity that can *collectively* contribute to the emancipation of every human person, be it "from crippling disease, from deprivation and hunger, from ignorance, from the prejudices of others which keep one in an inferior position, from narrow horizons and parochial visions" (ibid).

In the Christian approach to development, there could be "no hard and clear line of distinction between works of charity and those of justice" (1968: 78). The former engagement could at a particular moment just as much be an expression of the Christian ethos, of Christian love, than the latter (cf. 1968: 79-80). In fact, there is a case to be made for the Christian sector to work "primarily on the level of symptoms - to trouble-shoot rather than diagnose and prescribe - as they have neither a "Christian" blue-print for society, nor the technical competence to make diagnoses and prescriptions for complex social, economic and political questions" (1968: 79). Moreover, there is the argument that secular agencies are already engaged in preventive work and that the churches are most needed in curative and remedial work (ibid).

It is between recognising the need for a greater structural approach in the churches' development work, on the one hand, and the defence for the churches' project system

and participation in works of a more curative and remedial kind, on the other, that Dickinson's argumentation continued to fluctuate. This way of reasoning would be characterised by the demand for a renewal and rethinking of the churches' development work. Yet, it simultaneously did not want to totally disapprove of the churches' traditional mode of involvement. There was no plea for the disposal of a project approach, but for its continued qualitative innovation towards work of a more *preventive* kind:

> Some believe that churches should muster all possible help for the present and visible victims of disaster, while others argue for greater efforts in race relations, international affairs, economic integration, government-sponsored relief programs, etc., to ward off social disasters and make advance provision for caring for the victims of natural disasters in future.
>
> These are tortuous and agonizing questions which push us to the depths of our spiritual and theological understanding; they require decisions as to which groups among the needy will be helped. But in the final analysis we believe that churches should give much more attention - even if this entails the elimination of some relief programs, if that proves necessary to anticipating and preventing the eruption of man-made disasters. But we do not make a facile distinction between the two types of work because the churches' work among the needy remains and is a witness and sign in and to the world, as well as an opportunity for the churches' own spiritual growth. (ibid)

This is the line of thinking that continued in the 1970s and 1980s in the mainstream ecumenical development debate. In the final section of his already mentioned discussion, Itty briefly pointed out that conscious efforts continued in the early 1970s to bring the development projects of the churches in line with the fundamental principles of justice, self-reliance and people's participation[13] (see 1974: 13). It is however to Richard Dickinson's later important work, *Poor, Yet Making Many Rich: The Poor as Agents of Creative Justice*[14], that we can turn for a more substantial review of the project system within the WCC in the referred period.

In a chapter in this work, entitled "Relief and modified project assistance", Dickinson pointed out how, on the basis of recognised shortcomings[15] of the project system, efforts prevailed to transform the project system in the 1970s and 1980s. By way of

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[13] Itty pointed out here how the micro/project approach adopted a *people's movement* approach that recognises the poor as the subjects and autonomous, active agents of development (1974: 13).

[14] Published in 1983 by the WCC's Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development (CCPD).

[15] See here the list of shortcomings stipulated by Dickinson on pages 80 and 81 in this chapter of his book.

summary, we can point to the following units and initiatives within the WCC that according to Dickinson, made noticeable attempts towards transforming the project system:

Firstly, there were the efforts of CICARWS (the Commission for Interchurch Aid, Refugee and World Service) to devise a new 'Project List' that could assist the churches in moving away from a predominant preoccupation with material sharing to a greater focus on *personal* and *spiritual sharing* (which would reverse the position of the poor churches from being mere recipients to actors who, from the point of view of the rich churches, have much to offer in terms of personal and spiritual enrichment). As Dickinson quoted one particular source[16], the emphasis would increasingly be on the *enlargement* of the Project List to include activities that focus on the development of human resources, make much more of ecumenical dialogue on witness and service and establish new forms of solidarity not articulated in terms of money, "but in common commitment to issues of justice and human fulfilment, communication and mutual support" (1983: 81-82).

Aiming through its endeavours to transform the project system in a way that would found the churches' project activities on a much more *theologically* and *holistically* grounded understanding of the witness and ministry of the churches, Dickinson furthermore pointed out how CIRCAWS attached greater importance to *networking* strategies on local and regional levels, a process initiated far more 'from the bottom up'. In such a process there could be an expanded role for local, national and regional church groups in the articulation of priorities and the selection of projects. It also envisaged that the practice of networking would stimulate a deeper and new process of dialogue amongst groups as well as new patterns of partnership, not only between the so-called recipient groups, but also with funding partners. As a significant extension of this, it was asked from regional and national groups to create relationships *also* with non-institutional groups, such as the base ecclesiastic communities of the poor (1983: 82).

Secondly, there were the efforts of CCPD (the Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development), especially through the Ecumenical Development Fund

[16] 'Project List Review' drawn up by the Central Committee of CICARWS at their meeting in Dresden in 1981, p. 3.

(EDF) that was established by this commission after the Montreux I conference in 1970. Through this fund, CCPD allocated *block grants* to partner groups in selected countries and regions that would go beyond a fragmented project approach. The difference was that block grants were now allocated to *groups* rather than individual projects. It made these groups the real subjects who could, to a far greater extent, determine the nature and contents of their own development processes. It also made more integrated and holistic efforts possible as it allowed for longer-term and sustained processes that would not suffer from the uncertainties of year to year project funding (1983: 84).

One striking example of the block grant initiatives by CCPD was also this unit's so-called 'motivators training programme' by which young volunteers are selected and trained to live and work in the poorest of villages. A clear *conscientising* strategy was to be followed through which the motivators would assist poor villages "to discover and mobilize their own resources for self-reliance" and "to make themselves less vulnerable to decisions made outside of their village" (ibid). Dickinson concluded about the success and impact of the motivators programme, as follows:

> It illustrates one effort and approach by a WCC branch to be in solidarity with the poor by experimenting with new forms of resource transfers and the sharing of power. The evaluation team noted that the programme is people-centred and comprehensive. "The base is not a methodology of outside capital, but a drawing out of the people themselves." Not least important, of course, is the impact of the programme on the motivators themselves. "We have seen ex-motivators at work in strategic places - in government agricultural schemes, in theological colleges, as village pastors. They are all a core of future leadership in church and society." (1983: 87)

Finally, there were the loans and investment programmes launched through the Ecumenical Loan Fund (ECLOF) and the Ecumenical Development Cooperative Society (EDCS). Through these initiatives the WCC made loans available to small-scale operations on a low interest and long-term repayment basis (through ECLOF), but also larger and more comprehensive block loans (through EDCS). The aim was to achieve, through this kind of inexpensive, low interest loan (contrary to outright loans), a still greater sense of responsibility and ownership by the local people[17]. As

[17] Dickinson here also pointed to the excellent repayment record of loans, as well as its steady expansion. This was evident in the number and total amount of loans from 1979 to 1980 (89 to 118 loans, $1.4 to $1.9 million) and the overall growth rate of 33% (1983: 88).

Dickinson quoted a source[18] that stipulated the outstanding criteria for projects to be funded, foremost had to be the direct and radical *participation* of the poor and powerless in indigenous projects or programmes to meet their basic needs. They also had to be allocated direct *ownership* of the projects or programmes, which had to show the potential for achieving long-term, self-sustaining activity and growth. In an integrated manner, the projects or programmes also had to contribute to the social, economic and political advancement, not only of the direct participants, but of the larger surrounding *community* in order to avoid the unsustainable use of non-renewable resources and unsustainable impact on ecological systems (1983: 87-89).

To end off this historical review of the project system in the ecumenical movement, we have thus been presented with the image of an initiative that, in a continued way, appeared to be aware of and sensitive to the development relationships it sustained. It was an initiative that, through its spokespersons, appeared to be concerned about the *dominating relationships* that it might sustain (i.e. rich Christians and churches determining the development processes of poor people and Christians). It also appeared to signify a conscious effort between rich and poor counterparts, to constantly transform and enhance the quality of activities; or as Dickinson would phrase it, "to find more adequate ways of making the sharing of financial resources more effective, efficient, and expressive of true ecumenical sharing" (1983: 89).

As Dickinson went on to indicate, the "commitment to discover new forms of sharing within and among the churches" (ibid) became a trademark within the project initiative of the ecumenical movement. Although this refined initiative was not so much characterised by propositions of specific and concrete actions which the churches could undertake (i.e. beyond the specific projects it financed)[19] to foster the structural and institutional transformation that could bring about true development, it may however be said that this initiative points to a progression at least on the *ideological* level. It indicates the *search* for new relationships of mutual sharing and collective action among rich and poor, that no longer constitute a one-way movement

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[18] Fred Bronkema, "Ecumenical Development Cooperative Society: A Model for Action in Development Cooperation", pp. 3-4 (no details on the origins and date of this source were given by Dickinson).

[19] For Dickinson this was the frustrating part of WCC documentation dealing with the issue of the sharing of resources. While radically challenging existing forms of sharing, it still to a great extent, lacked in giving more concrete suggestions for practical sharing of resources, especially in the context of WCC programmes (1983: 91). See here in particular Dickinson's reference to the 1980 publication, *Empty Hands* (1983: 89-91).

from the materially affluent to the less affluent, but one in which the latter also have much to offer in terms of relationships, information, experience and values. If still countered by the reality of the churches failure by and large to achieve such relationships of authentic mutual sharing, it was nevertheless anticipated that the seeds of such relationships of sharing were already visible in the project system that, through its vision for transformation, was moving in such a direction (see Dickinson 1983: 89-91).

3.2.2 Relational perspective

The above historical review ought to earmark Richard Dickinson as the most prominent exponent of the 'moderate' pragmatic debate[20]. Having, to a certain extent, outlined his thinking in this review, it can be noted how this debate would still take on a more clear-cut angle through Dickinson's formulation of a *relational orientation* in church development work. Articulated to some extent in his publication, *Line and Plummet*[21] (see 1968: 77-78), this writer's argument would be conceptualised in a most focused and well-thought-out manner in an article, "Toward a New Focus for Churches' Development Projects" (published in 1970 in *The Ecumenical Review*).

In the latter article Dickinson, in another round of focused reflection, again came to review the project system of the churches. At the beginning of this article Dickinson suggested that prevailing points of criticism against the project system of the churches had to be taken seriously. These are points of criticism that the project system actually serves as a vehicle for a Western mode of development and worldview, that it makes Third World people and churches dependent on rich Europe and the West, and that it, as a whole, makes little impact towards large-scale transformation and change (see 1970: 210-211). Accordingly Dickinson also rejected the principle of a mere multiplication of church development projects to raise their impact. For him a more profound deliberation was called for regarding the actual impact and nature of the churches' development projects:

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[20] See again the identification of Dickinson as a central figure in the ecumenical development debate in footnote 2 in the previous chapter.

[21] See again the last paragraph on page 67 for the introduction of this book in the discussion.

> ...but the central issue remains, viz., what is the real impact of these efforts and what should be the core or focal point in church-sponsored development projects? It is alarming that, in many of the more materially affluent countries, concerted efforts are being made to increase the quantum of aid through the churches, without a probing new analyses of how these new resources are to be deployed. (1970: 211)

However, in the immediately following discussion Dickinson again clearly revealed the position taken in the 'moderate' pragmatic debate, namely that the churches' development projects remain significant and should continue:

> To ask what should be the core or focal point in church-sponsored project assumes that there should be church projects at all. I make that assumption. Elsewhere I have argued the validity of church projects as adding to the total quantum of assistance; as providing independent, non-governmental centers of initiative and effort; as exploiting the long experience and contacts of the churches in social service programs; as of continuing importance for the churches' own progressive self-affirmation, self-discovery, and spiritual growth. (1970: 212)

For Dickinson, it was not an abandonment of the project system that was called for, but a rethinking, a renewal, a redirection of the churches' projects. In his own words, there was the important need to bring "the diffused and refracted church-sponsored projects... into some *coherent strategy*" (ibid; italics added). Yet, having said this, more was needed. Such a coherent strategy had to be created on the basis of a particular philosophy and direction which would take a number of factors into account, namely i) the institutional characteristics and sociological realities of the churches, ii) the ethos of the Christian community and iii) the social situation in which the churches endeavour to work, each with its own unique character (ibid).

For Dickinson this could be captured in what he called the "relational element", or in what could be called "relational projects". The relational element most significantly captures the nature and existence of the churches as a social institution. It also most appropriately conceptualises the 'specialised' terrain of the churches and distinguishes them from other actors or institutions in the development field. Through such relational orientation more creative and effective modes of engagement by the churches are likely to emerge (see 1970: 212-213; also 219, 221).

What then is meant by the notion of 'relational projects'? According to Dickinson it constitutes projects that focus on *groups* rather than on individuals, on *interaction*

rather than on an attainment of living and material consumption. Here the emphasis is on how "sub-cultures of a national society" can be brought into a relationship of creative rather than destructive interaction. As it particularly concerns the many dispossessed and powerless groups in socially divided societies, the focal point has to be on how such groups can be brought into the cultural and political processes of those societies (1970: 212). Here the focus should not only be on individual groups, but on the possibility of creative interrelationships *between* different groups. As Dickinson, at a number of places in the discussion, applied the theologically familiar word of *reconciliation* (1970: 214, 218, 220; also Dickinson 1968: 77), the emphasis should be on how to bring *estranged* groups of a population "into a community of recognized common interests and mutual appreciation" (1968: 77[22]; also 1970: 212-213). Summarising the essence of such a development approach, Dickinson stated:

> All societies, and especially vulnerable less materially developed ones, are threatened by religious, racial, tribal, class, caste, linguistic, ethnic and other rivalries. Relationist projects would promote the interpenetration of these sub-cultures in the interests of how attitudes and actions of one group militate against the well-being of another, of mutual discovery of overarching and common aspirations. (1970: 213)[23]

From this point onwards Dickinson gave further meaning to the idea of a relational orientation to church development projects through a discussion of the apparent *advantages* and *liabilities* of such an approach. The various internal frictions mentioned in the latter quote, had to be regarded as a serious impediment to development. It is also such recognition that identifies a first point of advantage for the churches. As few other agencies conceive of their development function along the lines of reconciliation (or it can be added, as they do on an institutional level not have

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[22] With reference to the quoted passage, Dickinson's formulation in his earlier definition of the relational orientation in *Line and Plummet* (see again the first paragraph of 3.2.2 on p. 73) is here preferred as it better expresses the interrelational aspect emphasised at this point.

[23] Admitting at this point that the notion of "relationist projects" might still appear to be an abstract concept, Dickinson (ibid) went on to provide a number of examples of already active projects by the Christian churches which more concretely illustrate this concept. These were projects such as *Target Lengo*, a newspaper which gave news and views on social developments in Eastern Africa, the studies of Hinduism sponsored by the Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society in Bangalore, the Paulo Freire method of literary education in Brazil and Argentina, the studies and projects on private colleges and national development directed by the National Board for Christian Higher Education in India, the development of Dom Helder Camara's co-operatives in northeast Brazil aiming at the political conscientisation and active political participation of the participants, the Quaker programmes of international residential conferences and seminars and the Latin American Church and Society proposal to establish social justice training institutes.

the expertise and vision therefor), it suggests that the churches could, on *this* level, fulfill a significant and pioneering role in the area of development (1970: 214; see also 218-219).

There were also a number of other points of advantage marked by a relational approach. A second advantage is that the relational perspective has the potential of making the churches an important participant in the *deepening* and *broadening* of the concept of development. Dickinson argued that it was through the aspect of conceptualisation, namely their interpretation of the meaning of development (in the relational sense) and "their dialogic relationship with governmental and intergovernmental agencies in refining and maturing the conception of development and humanization", that the churches could make a more significant contribution than through the traditional projects that they were sponsoring (1970: 214-215; see also 1968: 94-97).

Dickinson pointed out a third advantage, namely that a relational approach also sharpens the churches' and the larger constituency's awareness of the *psychological* and *social dynamics* of developing countries. Bringing into the playing field of development such non-material factors as the various sub-cultures in developing societies' strivings for social justice, dignity, personal and cultural identification, and overall emancipation[24] (1970: 215), these factors could also be related to a fourth advantage. It was pointed out that a relational approach helps the churches to shift from a pre-occupation with individuals alone, to a greater concern for the *structures of community*. It gives the churches not only a far better understanding of how structures and power groupings in fact constitute the formative forces in a given society, but it also brings them to a point where they can see as their primary role the task of bringing the disadvantaged and excluded individuals of that society into new relationships of participation and interaction with the existing power groupings:

> These power groupings cannot be ignored. Part of the task for the future is to learn how to relate individuals to them in such a way that there is responsible participation,

[24] At this point Dickinson pointed to the examples of Third World societies and leaders, such as Nyerere's emphasis of 'standing-on-one's-own feet', Latin America's rejection of the Yankees, Sukarno's rejection of foreign aid, Frantz Fanon's plea for Africa's psychological emancipation from Europe and the black person's struggle in the USA for dignity and psychological freedom (1970: 215).

> and to relate them to one another in creative rather than destructive interaction. (1970: 215-216)

Pointing out as a corollary fifth advantage how a relational approach can help Christian communities, especially minority communities in *developing* societies, to *escape their ghetto mentality*, to become more open and forsake their exclusive preoccupation with preserving their rights, institutions and integrity (1970: 216), Dickinson identified two further points that more closely reflect the ideological aspect of development. Relational programmes bring forward the insight that *fewer investments in brick and mortar* efforts are required (ibid). Development is, in relational terms, not so much only a question of the materially affluent giving to the less affluent. It also involves a non-material, relational factor, which is fundamentally to its success.

A relational approach seventhly also demonstrates that, in terms of a general concern for humanisation, *all countries are in fact developing*. As so-called developed countries are grappling with problems similar to those in the so-called 'less developed' countries (such as divisions of race, class, religion and language), it suggests that "(q)uestions of international development and humanization apply to all nations, and the interrelationships between all countries" (1970: 217). This calls for the following relational role by the churches:

> Thus all countries are potential donors, and all countries are potential recipients of aid. If churches and church-sponsored projects can help us to focus on that reality, avoiding the paternalism of the givers of material assistance, and the sense of subservience and resentment of material aid, they will have helped to de-fuse an explosive situation within the world community, as well as within nations. (ibid)

Eighthly, and finally, it could be said that relational type projects are closely related to the *ethos* of the churches. In emphasising such notions as liberation, justice, reconciliation and *koinonia*, they stand at the heart of the mission of the churches. It is a mode of engagement that brings to the full the interrelational, communitarian and social emphasis of the Christian ethos. It conveys an authentic perspective on humanisation beyond a narrow material and economic meaning. It is an approach to development which aims to bring the poor and exploited of society into the centre of overall processes for reconciliation and participation (see 1970: 217-218).

As opposed to the above advantages, Dickinson finally addressed the criticism that might be directed against a relational approach. It could for instance be said that this approach constitutes a gross neglect of basic economic and physical needs[25]. In addition, there is also what he called "the psychological problem", namely that the relational approach can be perceived by developing countries as a convenient strategic instrument by the developed to undermine any competitive economic progress that might be achieved by them (i.e. the former):

> An emphasis on the relational type project is not without its limitations. There is the basic physical problem that many people in the two-thirds world desperately need health care and food; it would be hollow to speak of human dignity with these basic necessities unmet. There is also the psychological problem that already people in the less materially developed countries allege that the Western countries, and the churches in collusion with these Western governments, have not stressed economic material development for fear of competition with Western industries. (1970: 218)

In his response to such points of critique, Dickinson pointed out that the relational approach does *not* call for the end to all economic-centred engagement by the churches. Whereas we may, at this point, recall other pronouncements by this author in which he argued for the retainment of the social and charity services of the churches[26], Dickinson in a more subdued manner in this particular formulation, confirmed that there was a special role for the churches "to stimulate among governments a greater sense of their basic responsibility for economic development". Moreover, there is scope for a number of economic development projects by the churches with a strong relational component (such as projects through which individual farmers might be assisted to relate to the total village community) (ibid).

Yet, and this expresses Dickinson's ultimate position, beyond such kind of 'economic initiatives', primacy has to be given to relational kinds of development engagement. As it could rather be left to institutions such as governments to take responsibility for economic development at large, the relational element indicates an area in which the churches *can really excel.* The relational perspective brings before the churches the question whether they are not called to "work in more pioneering areas, doing what

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[25] This is in accordance with the position in the ecumenical debate that wanted to retain the economic entry point to development. See again pp. 42-43 of this study.

[26] See again pp. 68-69.

others cannot or will not" (1970: 218-219).

Contrary to narrow-minded economic views of development, Dickinson sustained that a relational approach does not constitute a mere by-product of development (see 1970: 220), but stands at the very centre of development. This is a conviction driven by the perception that the relational approach is just as much a meaningful promoter of material well-being as economic development efforts themselves, as it fosters the goals of self-reliance and inter-group cooperation (1970: 219).

For Dickinson, the case for the churches' preferential option for relational type projects ultimately brought him to the perspective on *conscientisation*, that the need to change peoples attitudes, thinking and values has to be seen as fundamental to authentic development. Here the meaning of relational projects does not lie in the quantum of its efforts (as in the case of economic-centred projects), but in its ability to influence the thinking and attitudes of people, as the ultimate requirement for a decisive development process:

> It is not the projects in and of themselves which will radically affect development; rather it is the influence which projects have upon the thinking and attitudes of those connected with them. If this is true, then relational projects have a great advantage over many of the traditional types of church sponsored activities. The major advantage of this re-orientation would be the sensitizing of people in both the "recipient" and "donor" countries... to dynamic social realities. Not the least would be the new and renewing understanding which the Westerner would get through his involvement in the fluid dynamics of a less materially developed and politically coherent nation - perceptions of inestimable value for him as he reflects on the social forces at work in his own society... Thus, while relational type projects do not have direct applicability to international disparities, it is difficult to imagine a better means for sensitizing people of less and more materially advanced countries to the basic human meanings of development and humanization. (1970: 220-221)

3.3 The 'radical' pragmatic debate

3.3.1 Modernisation critique

In the ecumenical development debate the 'moderate' pragmatic debate would not constitute the sum of the pragmatic debate, but would, in a most critical way, be supplemented by what may be called the 'radical' pragmatic debate. Taken up by one or two critical writers perhaps less affiliated to the centre of the mainstream

ecumenical debate[27] (as opposed to the central figure of Richard Dickinson), a fine line at first glance appears to separate this account of the pragmatic debate from the former. According to the point of view stated in the introduction of this chapter, the churches' development praxis through development projects is juxtaposed with the far-reaching principles of social justice and self-reliance in critical ecumenical development discourse. Both the radical and moderate versions would seem to accentuate such a contradiction. Viewed from the point of view of the 'moderate' pragmatic debate, it can be observed how this debate, similar to the radical account, in its own pertinent way, also pushes for the reform and transformation of the project system to work towards and meet the very principles of social justice and self-reliance. In this account of the pragmatic debate, the vision is also held that the churches' development projects have to become authentic instruments of social justice, self-reliance and people's participation.

Where then do the two accounts of the pragmatic debate separate? With a view to answering this question this section will focus on the work of Charles Elliot, who can be regarded as the main exponent of the 'radical' pragmatic debate. Being the person who singularly has staged a most critical and substantial discussion of the project system of the churches[28], which in this study embodies the 'radical' pragmatic debate to its full extent, we may here, for a start, return in more detail to Elliot's already mentioned earlier writing in which he introduced the concept of the 'pragmatic' debate.

In this publication, in the chapter entitled "The pragmatic debate"[29], Elliot argued that the so-called development efforts of the churches were born in the same ideological setting that sustained and promoted the *paternalistic* social service activities and attitudes of the Christian missionaries (see 1971: 110-113)[30]. Elliot proclaimed that it was the earliest so-called 'development' efforts of the churches and their agencies in

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[27] We are speaking here of Charles Elliot and C. T. Kurien, who both, in their own way, have been important contributors to the ecumenical development debate since its early stages.

[28] Whereas the contribution of C. T. Kurien, the other exponent of the 'radical' pragmatic debate', comprises only a number of pages (which has largely been covered in the introduction of this chapter), Elliot has more fully worked out this debate in a whole chapter and monograph respectively as indicated in the main discussion above.

[29] See again the beginning of this chapter (main section) and footnote 1.

[30] As concluded at the end of this subsection, we can, at this point, note how Elliot's notion of paternalism resembles the third meaning of charity formulated in chapter one (1.3.3).

the 1950s and early 1960s that "perpetuated both an inadequate understanding of development and an inadequate basis for the relationship between the wealthy West and the starving millions" (1971: 114). It was an enthusiasm for development that started with the "starving baby" hunger syndrome and in a renewed way strengthened the ideological position of the rich West and the Western churches:

> No great theological education was required to see that the parable of the Good Samaritan, for instance, applied directly to the starving babies of Africa. At a time when traditional missionary enterprises and institutions were threatened and discounted by the rise of nationalism in Africa and colonial Asia, the churches' flagging interest in the former colonies found a new focus in the brilliantly managed publicity campaigns of Oxfam, Freedom from Hunger and War on Want. (1971: 113-114)

From this point onwards Elliot also focused on the later refined project system of the WCC which was discussed earlier[31]. In this further deliberation Elliot acknowledged that "some small progress" had been made vis-à-vis the charity and missionary modes of engagement of the churches (1971: 115-116). Going so far as to refer to those projects that aim at manifesting the goals and vision of social justice and Richard Dickinson's concept of 'relational projects'[32] as a *media via* ('middle way') between the mission and charity services of the churches (see 1971: 117), Elliot, in the final analysis, doubted whether the project system's new arrangements of sharing and partnership between donor and recipient churches could be regarded as authentic expressions of a social justice framework. He contended that in the relationship of aid, *all* decision-making lay *in the hands of the donor*. Real partnership in decision-making, consequently, does not become possible by a mere "token acknowledgment by the donor that the recipient must be allowed a greater share in decision-making". It can only become possible where the donor transfers *all* decision-making power to the recipient and he/she in turn also receives back "a proportion of decision-making power from the hands of the recipient" (1971: 118).

In this sense Elliot concluded that the refined project system with its determination of 'progressive' arrangements of sharing and partnership, can still be regarded as

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[31] See again 3.2.1.

[32] In footnote 13 of the above-mentioned chapter by Elliot (see 1971: 123), this author in particular referred to the article of Dickinson that also constitutes the focus of the discussion in 3.2.2 ("Towards a new focus for churches' development projects").

conservative. As this brings us to a sustained assumption in the 'radical' pragmatic debate, it is argued that the projects system, albeit in its refined form, *in essence retains the relationships of power that were characteristic of the missionary and charity services of the churches*. It is a mode of engagement that cannot be transformed to the extent where there is no relationship of *dependence* from the side of the receivers. In essence, it remains a *one-way* activity in which the privileged donor reaches out to the poor recipient:

> Radical as this approach may be - and the evidence at the time of writing is that it will prove too radical for the constituency of the World Council of Churches - there is an important sense in which it is still conservative. Though it aims to transfer power, it does so by transferring resources to be used for the social and economic development of groups... in the poor countries. There is still, therefore, what we could call without disparagement some missionary flavour: the rich are encouraged to give a little to help the poor... However well intentioned and carefully circumscribed with non-discriminatory provisions, aid is aid and an agent of the maintenance of a dependent relationship. Therefore, the best aid that can be given to the poor countries is the means of breaking that relationship. And that means starting with the *marginados*. (1971: 119)

Having seen how Elliot, in the last two sentences of the above critique, also suggests a different mode of engagement by the churches, a different starting point, this is the appropriate point in the discussion to turn to his later work, *Comfortable Compassion? Poverty, Power, and the Church*. Contrary to the complacency that has often surfaced in writings of representatives from the ecumenical movement[33], of which the 'moderate' pragmatic debate can be taken as an example, Elliot in this book, comes to call for a radical *reorientation* of the churches/ecumenical movements' actual involvement in development (see 1987: 16). In continuation of his earlier critical account, Elliot also approached such reorientation from the entry point of critically reviewing the project system of the churches. There was one addition though which constituted the crux of Elliot's argumentation: his review of the project system was now framed in terms of a critical *modernisation perspective*.

Elliot contended that the project system of the churches had been nothing more than an uncritical *imitation and embracement of the Western modernisation paradigm of*

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[33] See here again the pronouncement of Richard Dickinson quoted at the beginning of chapter two.

development. However, there is far more to this than a mere rendering of development services and the creation of development structures according to a particular confined model or paradigm. The project system of the churches not only signifies an act of paternalism through which the recipients or poor are denied full participation and ownership of the development process, as Elliot argued in his earlier critique, but is also co-instrument of a larger development enterprise that imposes *a whole model of society* on other societies, a model with its particular worldview and thinking, its structuring and regulation of society. It creates a state of *dependency* on the part of the recipients, compelling them to abolish all indigenous systems of knowledge and living.

In his discussion, Elliot again (as in his earlier critique) pointed towards the churches' conscious separation of their development activities from their missionary and charity activities. By this they wanted to shed the colonial image that is attached to the latter services and activities in the now political independent developing countries. Yet, as Elliot indicated, this predisposition in actual fact provided the impetus for the churches' embracement of the modernisation paradigm (see 1987: 17-23). While the churches, through a newly defined ecumenical initiative[34], wanted to escape the missionary ways of doing and thinking, they identified themselves with the *secular* paradigm of development.

> We shall not be surprised to find, therefore, that the Church's involvement followed - both chronologically and in many respects ideologically - fashions dictated by the secular world. (1987: 25)

Elliot argued that there was a kind of *historical inevitability* about this identification. Sensing the need to produce results (that had to be different from those produced by the missionaries and that had to be the concrete manifestation of the new ecumenical impetus to be engaged in the contemporary socio-economic realities in world society) and starting their work with virtually no theoretical background in development, the

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[34] In his discussion Elliot pointed out, similar to our own indication in the first few pages of the introduction of this study, how the churches' involvement in development originated through the ecumenical movement/WCC. Elliot argued that it was as an ecumenical initiative that the churches' new involvement in development obtained legitimacy in the eyes of political leaders and governments and countered the old denominational rivalries created by the missionary activities of the churches (see 1987: 23-25).

churches were under great pressure to pick up ideas, plans and programmes from wherever they could (1987: 25). For a number of reasons they conveniently found these in the secular environment of *government* driven development operations, for a number of reasons. They perceived such development operations as the location to participate in a process of democratic development (cf. Elliot 1971: 116). Through linking up with these operations, they were now also receiving substantial funding that legitimated their own position in development (see 1987: 25-26, 43). Not less important, they were, through such engagement, also not required to acquire any critical competence in development, but only to channel resources and aid through their development projects to developing communities (see 1987: 37, 47-48, 63-70).

From the point of view of mainstream secular development enterprise, Elliot pointed out how this mode of development work gave central place to the notion of *economic growth.* In such terms development is understood "as economic growth plus some improvement in social conditions, e.g. education, health, housing and employment". It stipulates that improved living conditions require higher income, that higher income can in turn only be achieved by improved productivity and that greater productivity again, requires higher investment.

It is according to this rule of thinking the task of international cooperation - and thus of development projects - to provide a proportion of such a process of development and start the 'engine of growth'. It is furthermore the perception that this 'engine of growth' will bring about the required social change, namely urbanisation, a new class structure and a new range of tastes and expectations (1987: 31). Yet, and this brings us to the central point of modernisation thinking, inherent to this way of thinking is the belief that institutions and thought-patterns of people in developing countries are *unsuitable* to achieve the level of economic growth required to transform them into the kind of industrialised societies that are idealised. Therefore institutions, perceptions, attitudes and ways in which people relate to each other, need to be modernised. This would lead to the high rates of economic growth required and,

ultimately, the levels of consumption similar to those in the developed countries (1987: 32)[35].

According to Elliot, the churches' thinking was deeply penetrated by the ideology of modernisation (ibid). It is a feature that could clearly be recognised in their *projects* of development. It could be recognised in the *vocational schools* which they established to produce 'modern' apprentices and partisans. It is also illustrated by the model farms which they established to produce 'modern' agricultural *techniques* and 'modernise' the farming system of peasants. It is evident from the 'modern' forms of *economic organisation*, such as cooperatives and credit unions, which they introduced to bring incentives and discipline to the assumed backward peasantries (1987: 33).

According to Elliot projects such as the above indicated the implicit *racism* of the modernisation paradigm. It implies that what exists, is backward, inferior, in conflict with progress and generally lacking all the positive attributes that enabled the industrial countries to be successful. It *denies* the positive dynamics that are also at work in the societies targeted for development:

> It ignores for example, the subtlety of social organisation in an Indian village or an African tribe. It ignores the astonishing knowledge of many indigenous people of their environment and its constraints. It ignores the delicacy of personal relationships and the wisdom of rural people in every continent. (ibid)

Modernisation theory, furthermore, is built on the rationale that it is the low-income society that needs to be changed if living standards are to rise. The problem, consequently, is *'out there'*, and change needs to take place 'out there'. It conveniently assumes that the rich, developed countries can only have a *beneficial* impact on the poor, developing ones through their development assistance. This brought Elliot to a renewed structural and political perspective: modernisation theory denies the fact that through such factors as trade, investment and the communication of inappropriate consumption patterns and technologies, the rich countries might also be highly *destructive* of 'traditional' societies, or otherwise *obstructive* of the necessary changes. It is a mode of thinking and action that is not concerned about *process*, that is, processes of enrichment and impoverishment, participation and

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[35] At this point Elliot pertinently referred to the book by Gunnar Mydral, *Asian Drama* (published in 1968), which was very influential in framing a mode of development thinking along the lines of modernisation.

exclusion, access and control. It abstains from questions that are necessarily *political* and directs itself exclusively to *technocratic* questions about the implementation of projects. It assumes that, given enough successful projects, development will be achieved (1987: 35-36).

In conclusion, it can be said that with this perspective of Elliot we have come full circle. As his critique of a contemporary development enterprise would be applied to the project system of the churches, it very well resembles the critical ecumenical perspective which was set out in chapter one of this study. It closely correlates with those *three meanings* of charity formulated in chapter one, suggesting that the churches' engagement in development through projects in many ways, reveal the same ideological, political, structural and social theoretical deficiencies as their works of charity in an earlier historical period. Although a different kind of project was assumably being mediated by the churches in the new era of development (contrary to the traditional caritative activities by the missionaries such as schools, hospitals, orphanages and homes for the elderly) (see Elliot 1987: 33), and although the churches' efforts were now also part of a far greater national and international initiative determined by the secular world of power, Elliot's critical perspective presumes that the churches' development projects were exposing an ideologically and socially uncritical engagement similar to the churches' works of charity.

Thus the first critical meaning of a charitable mode of engagement in chapter one[36] is echoed by Elliot when he, in somewhat contradictory fashion to his whole argument, acknowledged that the churches had over-invested in approaches to development that are not necessarily destructive or unnecessary (1987: 117) and in certain contexts represent an important and appropriate area of work (1987: 179; also 13). But, as he immediately qualified his statement, it constitutes approaches to development that are *inadequate* by themselves and are easily subverted into countersigns. It is activities that more often become services for the elite and middle-class (1987: 117). As in the case of charity, it by and large neglects the factors of *structures* and *power* inherent to the problem of poverty. Elliot stated this, from the starting point of the project approach of the churches, as follows:

[36] Cf. here the meaning of charity in 1.3.1.

> If poverty persists, it is, one supposes, because insufficient projects or the wrong bundles of projects have been implemented. The remedy is more projects, more money, more professionals, more agencies. The fundamental relationships of power and wealth extraction are simply never faced. (1987: 48).

The approach of the churches to development through projects also resembles the second critical meaning of charity in chapter one[37]. Elliot argued that it was structural factors such as the international trading system, the international monetary system, foreign investment, the transfer of technology, access to information, the role of the military and the creation and maintenance of a sub-class of permanently poor, that have a far greater impact on the developing world and the living standards of poor people than the international aid (project) effort. Yet, these areas were almost by definition beyond the technical competence and sphere of action of the churches and reflected their *inability towards critical social thinking*. They are areas for which the clergy have traditionally not been trained, while only a very small group of lay people are close to these matters to be helpful in any way (1987: 63). Such incompetence was conveniently disguised and not challenged by the project involvement of the churches.

There would still be a more significant point to this neglect, which highlights the ideological aspect of the churches' bondage to the modernisation paradigm. This is the fact that many of the lay Christians who have been involved in international trade, technology transfer or banking, find it very difficult to subject their area of daily concern (which was also their source of daily bread!) to the radical critique of a structural approach. Not only do these Christians tend to be politically conservative, but they also tend to perceive capitalism as a *morally good*, even divinely sanctioned, form of organisation that also has to be the remedy of the poor. In Elliot's words:

> Within capitalism, they tend to regard the function of the market, whether for capital or technology or manufactured goods or raw materials, as the 'invisible hand' that guides human society to the greatest happiness of the greatest number... It is asking a very great deal... of such people to make the perceptual leap from the snug commercial environment in which they are embedded, to the perspective of the Kingdom of God in which the rich and powerful are brought under judgement, and the Kingdom is proclaimed to the poor and lowly and the meek... That perspective is so far out with the normal mind-set of those who operate the structures that it is not hard to understand

[37] Cf. here the meaning of charity in 1.3.2.

> why most Churches most of the time have remained mystified at, confused by, and therefore negligent of the central issues involved. (1987: 64)

As suggested by much of the discussion in this subsection, Elliot's criticism of the churches' project system could also be equated with the third meaning of charity in chapter one[38]. Elliot sustained the point that the development projects of the churches naturally presume *a movement from the rich to the poor*. It is an *irreversible* reality; the project system cannot be otherwise! Projects mean something to be executed *amongst* the poor and underprivileged. They represent an act of clear *paternalism*.

As in the case of his earlier work, Elliot again emphasised the essential *one-way* direction of the churches' projects[39]. It is a kind of operation which cannot be reversed by an emphasis on social justice, such as in the 'moderate' pragmatic debate. In addition to his earlier criticism, Elliot now also cast this particular point of his argument in terms of the critical modernisation perspective already referred to in this section. Although the argument has through the emphasis on justice come to be that the rich and powerful have used their wealth and power in a way that makes poverty inevitable and that justice can only be done *by the rich rendering reparation to the poor* through a transfer of resources, the assumption remains that these resources are used *in ways consistent with modernisation thinking*. It is a case in which the nature of development, in essence, retains its Western meaning. Only this time it is demanded *from the rich to give on a far greater scale* (see 1987: 52-53).

3.3.2 Conscientisation

Having started the discussion in 3.3.1 by pointing to an apparent common ground between the 'moderate' and 'radical' accounts of the pragmatic debate, it is possible on the basis of the further discussion in this subsection (3.3.1) to discern the continuous thread that separates the 'radical' pragmatic debate from the 'moderate' account. It can be said that the 'radical' pragmatic debate would hold it against the project system (and, for that matter, an apparent progressive 'moderate' pragmatic debate) *that it sustains the dominant position of the rich and powerful*. As is observed in the last paragraph of 3.3.1, this is a line of direction (from the dominant to the

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[38] Cf. here the meaning of charity in 1.3.3.

[39] We are referring here to the argumentation in his earlier 1971 work discussed in the first few pages of this subsection (3.3.1).

subordinate) that cannot be reversed. The very notion and reality of development projects spell out such an impossibility. A reversal of direction, a starting point from the position of the poor and subordinate, a radical breakthrough and transformation, therefore, demand the abolishment of a project vocabulary. It demands a profound reorientation.

From this point of concluding observation it may be observed how both the 'moderate' and 'radical' accounts of the pragmatic debate emphasise the concept of *conscientisation* in their respective perspectives of strategic reorientation. Having already indicated how the notion of conscientisation takes a central place in Richard Dickinson's formulation of a relational reorientation of the churches' development projects[40], it would here, for a start, be possible to say that both accounts appear to conceptualise the development role of the churches along the lines of what has, at a number of places in this study, been formulated as an idea- and value-centred approach to development. Accordingly, it seems that both accounts have come to define the actual role of the churches as one of conscientisation, value transformation, sensitisation and changing the minds, attitudes and behaviour of people.

Yet, at this point it can be indicated how the above determination of a decisive separation between the two accounts of the pragmatic debate, also indicates the fundamental difference between the two perspectives on conscientisation referred to here. As suggested by Elliot's critical assessment, the notion of conscientisation in the 'moderate' pragmatic debate rather reinforced the assumption that *development is a matter for the developing countries*. Through the medium of the project system, it sees the support of the efforts of the church development agencies in the developing countries with money, training and manpower for conscientisation work as the prevailing role of the churches in the developed countries. It is a case where the paradigms of modernisation and conscientisation overlap to a considerable extent. Both situate the most effective point of engagement for the metropolitan churches *in* the developing countries (1987: 117).

This brings us to the culminating point of the 'radical' pragmatic debate. Through the writing of Elliot it has come to propagate a far more radical and profound meaning of

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[40] See here again the final two paragraphs of 3.2.2.

conscientisation. At the basis of this is the perception that processes and programmes of conscientisation are *not* reducible to projects[41]. It points to complex, organic and autonomous processes that sharply contrast the traditional top-down, modernising, neatly planned projects adhered to by donors.

> It is simply not open to the managerial manipulations of Western categories of thought. It has to be organic, inevitably slow, uncertain, unpredictable, in many senses uncontrollable. Because it is essentially about freeing people in a number of dimensions of life that are complex, inter-active and hard to get, it is an approach that has to be lived experimentally, experientially and always provisionally. It is therefore an approach that is always opaque and untidy for those outside it. (1987: 90)

Indicating a complete shift from a project to a conscientisation vocabulary, one can note how the 'radical' pragmatic debate, through Elliot's perspective, highlights *a full-fledged idea- and value-centred role* for the churches in development. This perspective wants to convey that the explicit and distinctive role of the churches in development, is the creation of an *alternative consciousness* in society at large. It is this mode of involvement that belongs to the authentic task of the churches, *not* the execution of projects. In contrast to the 'moderate' pragmatic debate, the point of departure is radically reversed. It is a double entry point in which the rich and powerful are to be brought to an alternative consciousness *determined* by the interests, self-expression and point of view of the poor and powerless. Capturing the essence of such a *conscientisation of the rich*, Elliot wrote:

> What is definitive is the *level and nature of the consciousness that informs the actions of the rich and the powerful in their dealings with the relatively poor and relatively powerless...* It is the creation of an alternative consciousness, which in the spirit of magnificat and beatitude puts the poor and powerless at the centre, *that is the true task of the Church in development.* [italics added for emphasis] This alternative consciousness is not paternalistic or condescending: it is a consciousness that turns upside down the priorities and assumptions of twentieth century industrialised, secularised acquisitiveness... and judges relationships, structures, and economic ties not by what profit it brings to the dominant partner but by how much it enlarges the life chances of the subordinate partner. That means the judgements have to be made by the subordinate partner - which in turn means that the subordination is ended. The interests of the poor and powerless, as formulated and expressed by them themselves,

[41] We may here also compare the two other earlier, less elaborate accounts of the 'radical' pragmatic debate referred to in this chapter, namely that by C. T. Kurien (see 1974: 206-209) and in the earlier chapter by Elliot (see 1971: 119-122), in which a similar radical meaning of conscientisation is propagated.

> thus become definitive of the alternative consciousness. The rich and powerful, in other words, have to learn to use their wealth and power not for their own aggrandisement, but for the goals set by the poor and powerless. (1987: 117-118)

Following from such a basic formulation of what is to be viewed as the churches' *actual* role in a process of authentic development, it should be pointed out how Elliot would ultimately draw on more traditional *theological* metaphors to further deepen this particular understanding of the churches' development role. For Elliot, conscientisation in terms of the above formulation, comprises a 'pedagogy of the oppressed'. It is a meaning that he predominantly derives from the theories of Paulo Freire, the well-known Brazilian Roman Catholic educationist. For the churches this means that development has to start with the empowerment and *critical* conscientisation of the poor (see 1987: 85-87). Being a process in which poor people take charge of their *own* empowerment (1987: 86) and in which the churches from poor societies and countries may participate, Elliot argued that the conscientisation of the poor should ultimately be seen as meaningless without attending to the *wider* relationships and structures of power (economic and political). Elliot commented that the 'subjectification' of poor people that Freire had been attempting, was unlikely to mean a great deal unless it was accompanied by *the control of productive assets* (1987: 98). It obliges the poor and powerless and those who work with them, *to take as central the category of power* (1987: 101).

This realisation of the centrality of power (1987: 102) brings us to the renewed theological understanding of conscientisation that is referred to above. Propagated as the central argument of Elliot's book, the use (and misuse) of power is essentially a *religious* question. It is an issue that includes, but also goes beyond the economic, social and legal aspects of power. The exploitation of the weak by the strong, is an issue fundamental to human well-being and stands central to the Christian message (1987: 15). It pertains to the deepest "inner or spiritual essence" of human beings, that is, their natural tendency to dominate and exploit other fellow human beings, to seek their own self-interest (1987: 126-127).

For Elliot development, from the perspective of the churches, involves a fundamental *spiritual* dimension[42]. It involves what he called the "*dialectical* relationship between the outward, material world and the inner spiritual world" (1987: 119; italics added), or as he otherwise put it, between the "inner" and the "outward journey" (see e.g. 1987: 130, chap. 10). Manifested in the way that the conscientised oppressed would deal with their anger, frustration and resentment in their confrontation with the rich and powerful (see 1987: 88, 95-99), it also points to a fundamental focus on the rich and powerful themselves, that is, people and systems. It follows that the mirror image of 'a pedagogy of the oppressed' is a 'pedagogy of the rich'[43]. Unless the rich and powerful are liberated from their need to hang on to their wealth and power in an exclusive and defensive way, the process of confrontation is likely to lead to a (violent) confrontation between the rich and the poor as they demand a reorganisation of the social processes (1987: 95).

The way to authentic development consequently calls for *metanoia*, conversion, directed first and foremost to the rich and powerful (1987: 118). It is ultimately also a question of *the conversion of the church* (1987: 174). It points to the responsibility of the churches in the richer countries to confront the powers of corruption in their *own* societies, especially the impact of such powers on the poor locally and abroad. It likewise calls upon Christians in poorer countries to do the same (1987: 173).

As Elliot qualified, conversion and spiritual renewal should not here be seen in the confined individualistic sense traditionally emphasised by the churches (1987: 152). It is something totally different. The reality of power, and the consequent process of spiritual renewal, imply *three* ontological levels: individual, collective and cosmic (1987: 129). Translated in terms of the dialectical nature of the inward and outward journey, it involves a *concrete* level of confrontation and focus. It again does not nullify the aspect of critical social understanding and knowledge emphasised earlier[44]. It determines that the inner psychological/spiritual healing and growth and the reconstitution of consciousness ought to manifest itself in new *personal* life-styles

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[42] We can conclude that it is this spiritual aspect of conscientisation that was still undeveloped in the earlier accounts of the 'radical' pragmatic debate by Elliot and Kurien referred to in the previous footnote.

[43] At this point Elliot pointed out that Paulo Freire had also been working on 'a pedagogy of the rich' as a fundamental complement to 'a pedagogy of the oppressed' (1987: 95).

[44] See again p. 87.

(less material and simpler, for instance) (1987: 132-133). In the dialectical sense it also finds expression in the further *collective* outward journey of a concrete *confrontation* of institutions and structures.

It follows that *systems* and *institutions* also need spiritual renewal and conversion. Of fundamental importance are the powers behind the system (1987: 135, 153), something Elliot called "its inner wells of motivation and consciousness which make it use its power in a given (egocentric) way" (1987: 126). It points to a recognition and approach that confront and identify the outer expressions of such inner corruption and self-centredness. It insists that "the powers of corruption, of moral disintegration, of undisguised evil have to be overcome in the essence of our structures if we are to begin to see in our institutions the possibility of covenant quality relationships" 1987: 152). In concrete terms, it focuses on the demonic nature of an arrangement such as the international monetary system that continues to drain a continent like Africa, for instance, of over thirty present of the value of its exports to service its debts. Captured by Elliot in terms of a perspective on the *conversion* of the system at work, which dialectically ought to involve all three the ontological levels mentioned above:

> Certainly one can identify a dozen key actors, but in no sense are they free agents, by whose fiat the whole structure could be changed. Those individuals and the bureaucracies and power-systems they represent are trapped, not only in the sense that they cannot change the system, but in the deeper sense that they are ideologically blinded to the fact that it needs to be changed. For they are caught in a web of value systems and explanations that 'justify' the present arrangements by which Africa is systematically impoverished - and all for the sake of her own poor! (1987: 154)[45]

3.4 Impasse and renewal

We are concluding our cycle of discussion of the ecumenical development debate with a discussion of the pragmatic debate in this chapter. Having started off by setting out a most critical perspective on charity in the ecumenical development discourse and having, secondly, pointed out how a contemporary ecumenical development discourse poses a critical challenge to the meaning and ecclesiastical practice of charity, the discussion in this chapter indicated how the pragmatic debate designates a remaining

[45] In a final chapter Elliot in a most concrete way came to identify four examples of collective Christian action world-wide that serve as models of how the powers behind institutions and structures might be challenged. They are the Witness for Peace in Nicaragua, the peace movement in the United Kingdom, the Christian Institute of Southern Africa and Solidarity in Poland (see 1987: 157-173).

tension in the whole ecumenical debate on development. Indeed, it can be concluded that the pragmatic debate, in both its moderate and radical manifestations, have come to indicate the *continual struggle* of the Christian churches in the field of socio-economic and socio-political praxis. While the new notion of 'development' (we have indicated how 'development' represents a recently applied concept for the churches) promised much with regard to a responding new mode of social engagement by the churches, the pragmatic debate would come to stress the need for a continued *rethinking* and transformation of the churches' *actual* involvement in the domain of development.

Hence our suggestion that it might be possible to conclude here with the following two somewhat contradictory observations, namely, that the pragmatic debate has, in the context of the wider ecumenical development debate, come to represent an *impasse*, but also a prospect for *renewal* in terms of the churches' participation in development. It would first of all be possible to say that the pragmatic debate indicates an *enduring* divide between theory and praxis, between what has been aspired to and formulated by a relatively small group of progressive thinkers in theological, church and wider social theoretical circles, and what the majority of church people and agencies were and are in actual fact doing in the name of development.

We have come to see how both accounts of the pragmatic debate, moderate and radical, have been calling for a *reorientation* of the churches' involvement in development. In this regard we might even say that there appears a considerable overlap between these two critical accounts, as both point to a reorientation of the role of the churches in development along the lines of values, ideas, relationships and conscientisation. Both these accounts seem to represent a theoretical perspective through which the gap between development praxis and the critical discourse on development that was set out in chapter two, is substantially closed - between what has been put forward as an idea- and value-centred development praxis and our own description of the critical development discourse in chapter two, as an 'idea movement'.

Only, and this remains an important distinction, in the case of the 'radical' pragmatic debate, we have come to see how a far more radical, profound and convincing perspective on an idea- and value-centred development praxis has been articulated. It is a perspective emphasising the *impasse* of a prevailing project-centred approach by the churches, exposing the ideologically confined and biased nature of that approach and calling for a profound reorientation, a radical new mode of involvement in development.

At this point it should importantly be noted how the pragmatic debate remains an *undissolved* aspect of the ecumenical development debate. Having particularly through the radical account come to represent a most meaningful and fruitful problematisation from which new innovative conceptualisations of the churches' strategic involvement in development might emanate, it can be observed how this debate would coincide with the overall *decline* of the ecumenical development debate. Indeed, Charles Elliot's *Comfortable Compassion?* signals the last important and substantial publication in that branch of the ecumenical development debate associated with the WCC[46]. It would be followed by only a small number of scattered writings[47], in contrast to the rich stream of publications on the subject of development during the 1960s, 1970s and to a lesser extent the earlier part of the 1980s[48]. Referring here, almost without exception[49], to a small number of articles published in

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[46] See in this regard again our distinction at the beginning of this study between the two branches of the ecumenical development debate, namely that branch directly associated with the WCC and a related southeast Asian branch.

[47] Taking here, as indicated in the next sentence above, publications in *The Ecumenical Review* as case study, it can be noted how only three articles were published in this periodical throughout the 1980s that pertinently deal with the subject of development. In the 1990s, again, the total up to date have been restricted to four articles, of which the most recent was published in 1996. Regarding the latter group of four articles, it is in fact only the article by Gnana Robinson, "Christian Theology and Development" (1994), in which the subject of development is dealt with in terms of the nexus of religion/theology and development. While referring in one way or another to the concept of development, one of the remaining three articles rather deals with the topic of ecumenical diaconical work and relief services (that by E. Ferris in 1994 - see in this regard the next paragraph in the discussion above), another with an organisation such as the United Nations' relationship to development work (that by J. Dias in 1995) and the last one with the subject of development *per se*, thus not in any way reflecting the nexus of religion/theology/church and development (that by J. Ramalho in 1996).

[48] Whereas the 1980s, also to a greater extent, marked the decline of the ecumenical development debate (see next footnote), two important exceptions in this period prior to the publication of *Comfortable Compassion?* are Richard Dickinson's already mentioned book, *Poor, Yet Making Many Rich. The Poor as Agents of Creative Justice* (published in 1983) and Ans J. Van der Bent's already mentioned chapter in her book, *Vital Ecumenical Concerns* (published in 1986).

[49] The exception here to the corpus of articles mentioned in the previous footnote, is Richard Dickinson's entry on 'development' in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement* (Geneva: WCC) that was published in 1991.

The Ecumenical Review in the late 1980s and the 1990s[50], we do not encounter any significant attempts towards a continuing problematisation and rethinking of the churches' role in development along the critical lines of the pragmatic debate. We find no reference to particularly Elliot's above-mentioned book, no indication that this work and the critical debate that it represents, is taken seriously in the overall theological-ecclesiastical debate on development.

We might go so far as to state that the pragmatic debate, in more than one way, anticipates a fatigue in theological-ecclesiastical thinking on development, an inability to creatively move beyond the impasse spelled out by this debate. As an overview of the small corpus of ecumenical writings on development over the last decade suggests, recent ecumenical reflection on the theme of development points rather to a pursuance on old, familiar tracks. This is, for instance, evident from a number of contributions in a 1994 issue of *The Ecumenical Review* that focus rather on the subject of 'ecumenical diakonia' (Vol. 46, No. 3). In these reflections the issue is, for representatives of the WCC, still what Elizabeth Ferris formulated in her article as the question of how "to relate the emergency phase of assistance more closely with longer term development goals" (1974: 274). As also evident from an article by Martin Robra in the same series of reflections, the issue of WCC diakonia service at the beginning of the 1990s, still involved a serious grappling with the question of a just sharing of resources, or what he calls an "ongoing discussion of sharing in solidarity" (an issue much similar to what has been a central point of critique and reflection from an early stage in the ecumenical development debate/pragmatic debate) (see 1994: 283-285; cf. also 279-283).

However, it should be acknowledged that the broad ecumenical debate would in this period of decline of the ecumenical development debate, give important scope for reflections on themes such as 'civil society' and 'sustainable society'[51], themes that

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[50] While we are taking the WCC branch of the ecumenical development debate as our pertinent case study, it should be mentioned that it is still possible to trace a steady stream of articles on the subject of development during the late 1980s and early 1990s in those southeast Asian journals mentioned on p. 3 of the introduction. Yet, this group of writings is found scattered over various journals rather than concentrated in a particular journal or two in this period. In this period it shows a marked decline in publication in comparison to the rich stream of articles and other publications on the subject of development in the 1960s, 1970s and early 1980s.

[51] These themes constitute the focus of reflection in two issues of *The Ecumenical Review* in the 1990s, respectively in vol. 46/1 (1994) and vol. 48/3 (1996).

can in an important way, be related to the subject of development and consequently, make an important contribution to a deepening and renewal of the theological-ecclesiastical debate on development[52]. Having made this observation, it should at the same time be noted that the subject of development in no way explicitly figures in the discussions of the latter themes[53]. Whereas such connections have been made in the formal (secular) field of development studies in the 1980s and 1990s[54], no real attempt has been made to also creatively and innovatively reconsider the theological and church sector's own understanding of and engagement in development through the above-mentioned themes. In sum, it remains a case where ecumenical thinking on development has been restricted to the few scattered contributions already referred to[55].

It should, in the final instance, be said that the pragmatic debate does not only present us with a problematisation and impasse of a current theological-ecclesiastical development debate and praxis. As already concluded in this chapter, particularly under the headings of 'Relational perspective' (3.2.2) and 'Conscientisation' (3.3.2), both moderate and radical accounts of the pragmatic debate had in their own respective ways *begun to embark on a constructive road of renewal.* Significantly, it would be a perspective on renewal showing a close relation with our own perspective on strategic renewal that is spelled out in the introduction of this study and emphasises an authentic role for the churches in development along the lines of values, ideas, conscientisation, human behaviour and relationships, in short, what we have come to call a 'politics of ideas'.

Stated differently, it can be said that the pragmatic debate (in which the radical account represents the chronological progression as opposed to the moderate account)

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[52] It should be obvious that the theme of civil society would be especially important to the alternative perspective of the pragmatic debate, as it could give crucial political, normative and strategic momentum to the value-centred, idea-centred and relational orientation of this debate.

[53] The exception here is J. Ramalho's article in the issue focusing on sustainable development. However, see our evaluation of this article at the end of footnote 47.

[54] In this period the concept of 'sustainable development' would give articulation to a growing environmental and ecological concern in development thinking. Especially important in this period, however, is also the concept of 'civil society', which has increasingly come to articulate the conceptual and strategic essence of a new stream of people-centred theories on development, a movement in development thinking characterised by a juxtaposition of state- and government- versus civil society-centred strategies of development (see for e.g. Korten (1990: 28-29)).

[55] See again footnote 47.

presents us with the historical culmination of a movement in the ecumenical development debate that has constantly pressed for a reorientation of the churches' role in development similar to our own anticipation. This movement of thought presents us with the critical conceptual, strategic and ideological basis from which to further develop our own basic argument. From this basis we will, in the next few chapters of this study, further develop our argument, in accordance with the wider interdisciplinary and solidarity framework set out in the introduction. Exploring the perspectives of a broader NGO and alternative development debate in this further discussion, we will come to see how this debate, in a similar way (as in the ecumenical development debate), comes full circle by starting off with the problem of charity and progressing to a more sophisticated strategic perspective that penetrates a value- and idea-centred approach to development It is a perspective which in a significant sense, also identifies religion and its institutions as an important (if not crucial) actor in development.

CHAPTER FOUR

CHARITY AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE NGO DEVELOPMENT DEBATE

4.1 Introduction

A striking feature of the ecumenical development debate focused on in the first three chapters of this study, is its general neglect of a concurrent NGO debate on development[1]. Making such an observation, it can simultaneously be noted how, *from the point of view of the latter NGO development debate*, a number of perspectives emanate that call for a closer identification and comparison with the ecumenical development debate presented in the first three chapters of this study. Pointing to perspectives here which reflect a *charity-development juxtaposition*, similar to that in the ecumenical development debate, they are:

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[1] (1) With *NGO development debate* is meant a growing and substantial corpus of literature in the broad field of development that today has come to focus on the contemporary phenomenon of development-oriented NGOs or what might otherwise be called non-governmental development organisations (NGDOs). While the concepts 'NGOs', 'development-oriented NGOs' and 'developmental NGOs' are more commonly used in this debate (see e.g. OECD 1987: 4-8), the critical point has also been made (in this debate) that, given the broad and diversified range of institutions/associations that are covered by the term non-governmental organisation (NGO), the "concept NGO is wrongly used to denominate non-governmental *development* organizations (NGDOs): namely *one* form of NGO devoted specifically to the design, study and/or execution of *development* programs and projects in Third World countries, with the support of international development cooperation institutions and the direct involvement of the popular sectors" (italics added) (Padron 1987: 70). Taking the latter as an important point of distinction that should also inform the discussion in this chapter, and acknowledging the usefulness of the concept 'NGDO' that is used by some writers in the NGO development debate (see e.g. Padron 1987: 69-74; also Fowler 1998: 136-155; Wils 1994: 1-7; Verhagen 1989: 2-6), the more commonly used concepts of 'NGOs' and 'development-oriented NGOs' will nevertheless still be applied in this chapter (and by implication, also in the next chapter and elsewhere in the study).

(2) This statement echoes recent critical voices in the ecumenical movement who have recognised Christian theology's general neglect of the theme of civil society up to date, in contrast to the social sciences (see e.g. Batista 1995: 246). In an important article in the already mentioned vol. 46/1 of *The Ecumenical Review* (see footnote 51 of the previous chapter again) Konrad Raiser put this critical observation in perspective when he argued that, contrary to a civil society model or paradigm, the basic models for the structure of the church, have historically rather mirrored developments in the organisation of the *state* and today increasingly also those in the *business* corporation (1994: 42). See also the articles by De Santa Ana (1994: 3-11), Batista (1994: 12-18), Duchrow (1994: 21-27) and Ichiyo (1994: 28-37) in the same issue, which together with Raiser's contribution, mark the beginning of a more explicit and systematic civil society orientation and awareness in the ecumenical movement/WCC.

(3) Thus the argument would here be, in accordance with the observations in point (2), that a civil society orientation or paradigm should necessarily have brought a theological and ecclesiastical debate on development to at least some kind of identification with the NGO debate on development and the (civil society!) organisations (i.e. development-oriented NGOs) on which this latter debate has come to focus. See in addition to this argument again our connection of the notion of 'development' with that of 'civil society' at the end of the previous chapter (pp. 97-98, footnotes 51, 52 and 54).

Firstly, the *historical perspective in the NGO development debate that relates the origins of development-oriented NGOs from both the North and the South, developed and developing worlds, to a definite welfare or relief[2] approach.* Referring here to development-oriented NGOs as a post-World War (I and II) phenomenon, this perspective points to the *gradual progression* of development-oriented NGOs from the initial starting-point of a relief-oriented involvement. It portrays development-oriented NGOs as a special category that, from a historical point of view, did not start as development agencies, but were drawn to development by first providing relief in emergency situations whereafter they started to recognise that, in developing countries, relief was not enough[3].

Particularly significant in this perspective, is *its recognition of the NGO sector's close proximity to the Christian churches, both in the North and the South.* It indicates the clear church and Christian presence amongst the phenomenon of development-oriented NGOs, not only during the initial stages of their evolution, but in fact until the present day. It holds that the churches did not only substantially *contribute* to the voluntary and morally committed character of the NGO sector through the initial relief and welfare services, but that they, at later stages, also *served* as the indispensable supporters of NGOs' political activities (e.g. in Latin America[4]). Not neglecting the fact that the NGO sector may have taken on an increasing secular identity, this perspective sustains that the phenomenon of development-oriented NGOs cannot be understood apart from their *religious* roots and also maintains that church-related bodies, churches and Christian NGOs, still make out a substantial part of the contemporary NGO movement[5].

Secondly, the *perspective in the NGO development debate which sustains or reiterates*

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[2] As evident from the discussion in this chapter, preference is generally given in the NGO development debate to the terms 'relief' and 'welfare', rather than 'charity' that we commonly apply in this study.

[3] See here in particular OECD (1987: 4).

[4] See here especially the article by Leilah Landim, "NGOs in Latin America", in which this author pointed out how the churches represented the fundamental political space through which NGOs could carry out their activities during the periods of political authoritarianism in Latin America in the 1960s and 1970s. It was their close proximity to the churches in this period, Landim concluded, that left its mark on the NGO sector until the present day (1987: 32).

[5] See Landim 1987: 31-35; OECD 1987: 4-15; also Arruda 1985: 12-13; Bhatt 1995: 77; Bratton 1989: 570-571; Brodhead 1987: 2-5; De Graaf 1987: 277-282; Fernandez 1987: 39-43; Howes and Sattar 1992: 103-104.

(*Whereas the contributions by Arruda, De Graaf and Fernandez do not so much reflect the welfare aspect of this first perspective, they nevertheless fit in here as they likewise give evidence of the NGO sector's close historical

the welfare, relief/development dichotomy in the reflections on development-oriented NGOs as a more recent and present-day phenomenon. Related to the first perspective, this second perspective concerns itself with the question of the 'scaling-up' and institutional transformation of development-oriented NGOs towards more sophisticated modes of development activity that would have a more long-term, emancipatory and structural impact on the lives of the poor and beneficiaries. Recognising the more 'complex' nature of many development-oriented NGOs by which other orientations (e.g. advocacy, development education) might coexist with a welfare approach[6], this perspective highlights the own internal organisational and ideological/mental constraints within NGO ranks that complicate their surrendering of a welfare/relief orientation and character. To quote here one author's articulation of the particular difficulties and challenges encountered by NGOs to transform themselves from relief- to development-oriented organisations, which sums up this perspective well:

> This presents a particular difficulty and challenge to NGOs whose initial entry and activities have been in relief and refugee assistance. To move from relief to development means much more than just starting development projects in refugee camps, because the basis of the interaction and relationship between NGOs and intended beneficiaries must change. This has consequences for field staff, their selection, values, incentives and training, as well as for the structure of the NGO itself and its systems of financing. (Fowler 1988: 21)[7]

Thirdly, the *perspective in the NGO development debate that stresses the deficiency of the project-centred approach in NGO development activity, on the strategic and ideological level.* Being, as in the case of the second perspective, concerned with the issue of strategic renewal in the NGO sector, this perspective bears close resemblance to the critical position in the ecumenical development debate that regards the project approach as the inadequate *media via* between welfare/relief and authentic

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and ongoing relationship with the Christian churches.)

[6] Identifying, for instance, *six* categories of 'orientation' amongst development-oriented NGOs in her recent contribution to the NGO development debate, viz., welfare, development, advocacy, development education, networking and research, Anna Vakil furthermore noted that many NGOs are in fact displaying more than one orientation and in some cases as many as four or five of the six today (1997: 2063).

[7] See the following authors for insights into this second perspective: Brodhead 1987: 2-4; Elliot 1987a: 57-60; Fowler 1993: 329-335; 1988: 12-25; Mimica and Stubbs 1996: 281-290; Smith 1984: 118-122, 154-155.

development[8]. It denounces the predominant technocratic and linear ('blueprint') approach in mainstream development[9] that treats development as a set of predictable outcomes to be achieved through the ordering of predetermined and logical inputs and outputs. To the contrary, it portrays development as the product of complex and contingent processes that can only be partially predicted and controlled. It introduces the notions of empowerment, democratisation and development education/conscientisation as an 'alternative' set of development vocabulary and captures development as a (political) *process* by which the poor and hitherto subordinate/the South/target group constantly negotiate and break through the relationships of dependence and subordination to become co-creators and owners of the process. In this sense, it also *redirects* the problem of development to the society of the sender/donor/the North/the rich. The following quote presents a powerful articulation of the underlying principle of the third perspective, stating that the lack of people's participation in development:

> ...is not a problem unique to research, education and training. It also underlies the dangerous obsession with 'projects' that characterises the work of most development agencies. The logical corollary of a world-view which sees development as a series of technical transfers mediated by experts is that, given a sufficient number of situations, or projects, in which these transfers can be made, 'development' will occur. But, as Sithembiso Nyoni has pointed out, no country in the world has ever developed itself through projects; development results from a long process of experiment and innovation through which people build up the skills, knowledge and self-confidence necessary to shape their environment in ways which foster progress toward goals such as economic growth, equity in income distribution, and political freedom. At root then, development is about processes of enrichment, empowerment and participation, which

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[8] (1) See again the third paragraph on p. 82.

(2) With this comparison the contribution of Charles Elliot can again be noted. As the most important exponent of the 'radical' pragmatic debate, this author delivered a similar 'project critique' in a paper at the important symposium on NGOs and development in London in 1987. See the supplementary issue of volume 15 (1987) of the journal *World Development* in which Elliot's paper (1987: 57-68) as well as the rest of the symposium papers were published under the theme, "Development Alternatives: The Challenge for NGOs".

[9] Here we may, for instance, note how Charles Elliot, as in the case of his contribution to the ecumenical development debate (see previous footnote), came to associate the project approach to development with a Western dominated neo-*modernisation* paradigm in development thinking, a paradigm devoid of any critical political meaning and ideological self-critique (see 1987: 58-68).

> the technocratic, project-oriented view of the world simply cannot accommodate. (Edwards 1989: 119-120)[10]

Fourthly, the *perspective in the NGO development debate that overlaps with the first three perspectives in its recognition of the imperfection of past and present welfare/relief, project, localised and isolated efforts in development, but that, more fully than the former three, concentrates on the question of strategic innovation by propagating and problematising a broad theory of scaling-up and mainstreaming.* Reflecting various types of scaling-up[11] in its framework, but also many different concepts such as development education, advocacy, empowerment, lobbying and networking, this perspective finds particular expression in the discourses of *public policy-making*, *political democratisation* and *institutional/organisational transformation*. Also referred to as the 'New Policy Agenda' in NGO development discourse, this perspective emphasises the need of 'mainstreaming', that is, for NGOs to become part of the official policy processes in order to converse their 'alternative' solutions and programmes into the general and official policy framework[12]. In view of such an 'agenda' this perspective also problematises and complicates the prospects of NGOs in the policy arena by focusing on the internal *organisational* and external *relational* elements that confront NGOs as prospective political and policy actors. It emphasises the need for organisational transformation among NGOs (in terms of 'accountability' and 'performance') and the establishment of viable relationships with the other actors in the political or policy arena: their own clientele/the poor, local and

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[10] (1) See furthermore Biggs and Neame 1995: 31-33; Chambers 1993: 27-39, 76-88; 1989: 16-18; Friedmann 1995: 139-143, 158; Fowler 1998: 142; 1995: 144-155; Gariyo 1995: 138; Clark 1991: 69-70; Elliot 1987a: 58-68; Padron 1987: 74-75; Verhagen 1987: 15-16, 75.

(2) While not reflecting the NGO development debate in a direct way, we may here also refer to the book by Robert Cassen (and associates), *Does Aid Work? Report to an Intergovernmental Task Force* (1986). An important source for writers from the NGO development debate critical of the project approach (see e.g. Chambers 1993: 76; Fowler 1995: 145), this work's observation of the dominance of the economic and technical elements in project design and implementation at the cost of the institutional, social and political elements, correlates well with the critical view in the NGO development debate (see 1986: 117; also 105-117; 306-313).

[11] In his meaningful synthesis of the different definitions of scaling-up Peter Uvin identified four different forms or types, viz. quantitative scaling-up, functional scaling-up, political scaling-up and organisational scaling-up (1995b: 498-499; 1995a: 928-929). Contrariwise, John Clark made a distinction among three types of scaling-up, viz. project replication, building grassroots movements and influencing policy reform (1991: 84-85), while Michael Edwards and David Hulme again identified four possible ways of scaling-up: via working with government, operational expansion, lobbying and advocacy and via supporting local level initiative (1992a: 212-213).

[12] For this particular definition of mainstreaming see Wils (1995: 53).

Northern governments/states, donors, other NGOs and aid agencies[13].

In conclusion of the discussion so far, we have attempted to show how, in terms of the presentation of the ecumenical development debate in this study, a number of perspectives can be drawn from a concurrent NGO development debate that reveal a remarkable parallel with the former debate. We have attempted to show how these perspectives, in terms of the interdisciplinary intentions of this study, demarcate the NGO development debate as an important *source of learning* for an ecumenical development debate in search of strategic renewal. In this sense, we have attempted to show how these perspectives come to suggest that such a mutual comparison and identification are more than coincidental and become possible not without good reason. To take the above first perspective here as the basic point of departure, they come to suggest that *development-oriented NGOs stem from the same vital sphere that also marks the initial attempts of the churches in the realm of development.* They come to suggest that development-oriented NGOs originate from the same *voluntary, civil society association* as the churches, vis-à-vis and in relation to the domains of the state and government, and that they (the NGOs) have shared with them a similar, if not the same, *moral*, *social* and at times *political commitment* towards the problem of world poverty and human suffering[14]. They come to suggest that, while development-oriented NGOs have, from the origins of such an original *religious* overlapping, taken on a dynamics of their own and are today also separated from the religious and church

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[13] (1) See Annis 1987: 129-133; Biggs and Neame 1995: 31-40; Bratton 1990: 87-116; Chambers 1993: 89-105; 1992: 40-47; Clark 1992: 191-202; 1991: 83-141; Edwards and Hulme 1995: 3-15; 1995a: 219-228; 1992: 13-27; 1992a: 211-216; Friedmann 1995: 139-162; Fowler 1998: 137-155; 1995: 144-155; 1993: 325-337; Gariyo 1995: 131-138; Hashemi 1995; 103-110; OECD 1986: 3-23; Robinson 1992: 28-39; Uvin 1995: 495-510; 1995a: 927-938; 1993: 25-337; Wils 1995: 53-62.

(2) As evident from the reference list in (1), the fourth perspective represents an exhaustive corpus of writings in the NGO development debate. However, this should by no means be regarded as a complete reference list on the fourth perspective as it only comprises a relatively small selection of essays from the two important books, *Non-governmental Organisations - Performance and Accountability: Beyond the Magic Bullet* (1995) and *Making a Difference: NGOs and Development in a Changing World* (1992) (both edited by Michael Edwards and David Hulme) as well as a number of important articles, chapters in books and study documents. In addition to this list, reference can also be made to the rest of the essays (mostly case studies) in the above-mentioned two books and the following selection of articles and study documents that in one way or another relate to the fourth perspective: Bratton 1989: 569-585; Drabek 1987: ix-xv; Esman and Uphoff 1984: 56-57; Fowler 1991: 53-78; Nogueira 1987: 169-177; Stremlau 1987: 213-224; Van der Heijden 1987: 103-112; Wils et al 1988: 30-51; Wils 1988: 73-77.

[14] Ben Turok, a South African scholar and politician, drew the following meaningful parallel between the churches and NGO sector under the rubric of civil society at a conference on the role of the churches and NGOs in development:

> Civil society structures are voluntary and they have a high moral profile. NGOs are based on morality, or supposed to be, and the churches are based on morality, or supposed to be. (1995: 165)

sector[15], they (the NGOs) likewise have grappled and continue to grapple with the basic problem of charity (as the historical starting-point of their inquiry) and the consequent question of strategic innovation. It is an undertaking, these perspectives suggest, that has brought the NGO development debate to pose similar critical ideological, operational and relational questions (e.g. with regard to the project approach in development, the relation between North and South in development). In sum, *they come to suggest a debate on development that, as in the case of our own structuring of the ecumenical development debate in this study, has in the historical and strategic sense been necessarily and significantly framed by a similar charity-development juxtaposition (albeit with the qualification that a stage has been reached in this frame of reference, and perhaps more so in the case of the NGO development debate, where the tension has to a greater extent shifted to a juxtaposition between 'less desirable' and 'insufficient' modes of 'development' action and what is rather regarded as 'authentic' modes of development).*

Against the background of such a comparative view of the ecumenical and NGO debates on development, this chapter will focus on the perspective of David Korten. Having already gone some distance in the introduction of this study to indicate how we want to develop a further deepening perspective along the lines of Korten's framework of four generations of NGO development action[16], the aim will be to, in terms of the quest for *theoretical* and *strategic innovation* posed by the charity-development juxtaposition in the NGO development debate, discuss the significance of Korten's *initially* identified scheme of three generations of NGO development action[17]. This will be done by drawing not only on Korten's own writings, but also on a larger corpus of literature that includes other complementary material from the people-centred theoretical point of view (i.e. the point of view from which Korten also departs). Amongst this latter category of other complementary material will finally also be those writings in the NGO development debate that have taken a critical

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[15] Here we can speak of the ambivalent character of developmental NGOs today. Having taken on an increasingly secular identity, they also still have amongst their ranks a considerable number of organisations that in one way or another have a church/religious affiliation. See in this regard Landim 1987: 32; OECD 1987: 5, 10.

[16] See again the exposition in the introduction from p. 6 onwards.

[17] We are referring here to the framework that Korten initially set out in his article, "Third Generation NGO Strategies: A Key to People-Centred Development", in the important supplementary issue of volume 15 (1987) of *World Development* and again in more elaborate fashion as a first meaningful unit of reflection in his book, *Getting to the 21st Century: Voluntary Action and the Global Agenda* (1990).

position against Korten and the so-called 'New Policy Agenda', that is, an agenda that, similar to Korten's third generation perspective, has allocated an elevated democratising, institutional and policy role to development-oriented NGOs.

4.2 Three generations of NGO development action - *David Korten*

> My own insights into the strategic choices facing NGOs began to take shape in 1985 while I was working with the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID). I had been looking primarily to the large donor agencies to serve as instruments for the institutional changes required to support the community-based management of development resources. In 1985 I came to the conclusion that the large donors were not the answer to this need...The need for more basic institutional change remained as real as ever. If the large donors could not address it, then who would? Colleagues in AID who were also struggling to answer this question suggested that we should more closely look at the potential of NGOs to assume this role. As I began to look at the experience of NGOs in development from the perspective of this need, I was struck that there seemed to be a definite pattern of evolution within the community away from more traditional relief activities and toward greater involvement in catalyzing larger institutional and policy changes.
>
> This pattern seemed to reflect the learning that many of these organizations had derived from the critical self-examination of their own experience. The pattern seemed to involve three identifiable stages or generations of strategic orientation, each moving further away from alleviating symptoms toward attacking ever more fundamental causes. I decided to identify these stages as *generations*. (Korten 1990: 114-115)

In terms of the above-mentioned four perspectives, Korten's contribution to the NGO development debate can be appreciated for integrating them into a single framework. As the above introductory words from *Getting to the 21st Century: Voluntary Action and the Global Agenda* come to orientate us about this author's particular appreciation of the role of NGOs in development, a definite pattern of evolution in NGO development activity could be recognised according to him. It has been an involvement in development that in the historical and strategic sense extends across the extreme poles of an initial relief involvement, on the one hand, and a later engagement in affecting policy and institutional change, on the other. It indicates a span of progressing NGO development activity that can be best defined by various stages or *generations* of strategic orientation.

4.2.1 Generation one: relief and welfare

First generation strategies, according to Korten, grew out of a long tradition of international voluntary action aimed at providing welfare services to the poor and assisting the victims of wars and natural disasters[18]. They involve NGOs in the direct delivery of services to meet immediate deficiencies that are experienced by the beneficiary population, such as needs for food, health care or shelter. Their focus is on individuals and families and the benefits delivered, depend entirely on the resource capacity of the NGOs involved (1990: 115; 1987: 148).

Overlapping extensively with the first perspective in the NGO development debate stated above, Korten pointed out how many of the contemporary international NGOs, such as Catholic Relief Services, CARE, OXFAM UK, Save the Children, World Vision and the Danish Association for International Co-operation, originated during World War I and II to render relief and rehabilitation in the war-torn societies of Europe. They were full-fledged charitable relief organisations which started with an inward focus on the immediate needs of European societies. It was only in the following years, as recovery progressed in Europe, that they also directed their attention to new emergencies in Southern countries, particularly in assisting refugees from political conflicts in China, India, Korea and the Middle East (1990: 116; also 1987: 147-148).

According to Korten, in the case of NGOs indigenous to Southern countries, patterns similar to those of NGOs in the North existed. They were oriented to charitable welfare actions, commonly depended on funds and commodities from the North and were often church- or mission-related, such as in Latin America in the 1950s and 1960s and Africa throughout the colonial era. In Asia (e.g. in Bangladesh) their proliferation could also be largely accounted to efforts to respond to the needs of victims of war and national disaster (1990, ibid).

In evaluating the impact of first generation strategies, Korten conceded that "relief

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[18] In this regard Korten referred to a number of examples, mostly characterised by a significant *religious* (!) affiliation: the initiatives of Irish Protestants in 1647 to send food aid to settlers in North America who were victims of wars with the Indians, the assistance provided by private British charities through much of the 17th and 18th centuries to America to support missionaries and schools for Indians, Negroes and poor whites, the voluntary assistance provided by private groups in the United States in 1793 to refugees who fled revolutionary turmoil in Santo Domingo, and the establishment of several international relief and missionary societies in the 1800s in Europe and America, including the Red Cross (1990: 115).

efforts remain[ed] an essential and appropriate response to emergency situations that demand immediate and effective humanitarian assistance". Situations such as these are part of human reality and there will always be individuals within any community whose circumstances necessarily demand some form of welfare assistance. However, as a *development strategy*, first generation strategies of relief and welfare represent a contradiction in terms. Such approaches offer little more than a temporary alleviation of the *symptoms* of underdevelopment and can therefore not be confused with *development* assistance (1990: 118; 1987: 148).

While first generation approaches can be regarded as appropriate to emergency situations that create special temporary needs, they contribute little or nothing to the ability of poor people and countries *to meet their own needs on a sustained basis* (1987, ibid). They presume a kind of NGO that rarely theorises about *why* the assisted people have unmet needs. For this NGO, it merely remains a factor of responding to the immediate and visible needs of a particular individual or group. The NGO in all cases remains the doer and the beneficiary, the passive receiver. The management capability required by this NGO, also primarily remains a capability in logistics management. It contributes little in terms of a critical development awareness besides its fundraising appeals to the general public:

> They focus on dramatized presentations of starving children appealing from magazines and TV screens with sad and longing eyes for a kind person to help them by sending money to the sponsoring NGO. (1990: 116)

4.2.2 Generation two: small-scale, self-reliant local development

According to Korten, second generation strategies anticipate a development approach conscious of the deficiencies of first generation strategies. While some of the NGOs engaging in second generation strategies have done so since their founding, a more common pattern has been for NGOs who have worked with the poor in Southern countries, to start with first generation strategies. Generally speaking, their experience leads them to only gradually question the validity of relief and welfare activities (1990: 118).

Second generation strategies, in particular, point to the period in the late 1970s when NGOs came to see the need for a more developmental approach. It is the period in the evolution of development thinking that became dominated by the welfare versus

development debate[19]. The pendulum had now swung to what is often referred to as *community development* strategies. In terms of NGO development activity, these strategies involve village level self-help actions in areas such as preventive health, improved agricultural practices, local organisation (e.g. the formation of community councils) and local infrastructure (e.g. the digging of wells, the building of feeder roads, etc.) (1990, ibid; 1987: 148).

Following from the above examples it can be said that Korten's notion of second generation strategies corresponds with the third perspective above on the project-centred approach in NGO development activity. As Korten would also come to use the notion of "village development projects" to describe the second generation development activities of NGOs, this might first of all be understood in the more progressive sense of the word. Second generation strategies are, according to him, clearly developmental in concept. What distinguishes them from first generation relief and welfare approaches, is the stress on local *self-reliance*, with the intent that benefits will be sustained beyond the period of NGO assistance. The notion of *empowerment* has now become the guiding principle, whereby the energies of NGOs shift to developing the capacities of local peoples to better meet their *own* needs (1990, ibid; 1987, ibid).

Second generation development strategies, therefore, call on NGOs to more and more take on the role of *mobilisers* rather than that of actual doers. The role of NGOs is seen as an intervening one to activate the potential that lies dormant in the community and individuals[20].

> Second generation strategies involve an implicit theory of village development that assumes local inertia is the heart of the problem. According to this theory the potential for self-advancement rests within the village community, but remains dormant because of the inertia of tradition, isolation and a lack of education and proper health care. The theory suggests that this inertia can be broken through the intervention of an outside change agent who helps the community realize its potentials through education,

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[19] In this regard Korten (1990: 118) referred to the influence of John Sommer's book, *Beyond Charity* (published in 1977 by The Overseas Development Council), in changing the thinking of many NGOs in this period.

[20] At the level of the individual, Korten more particularly referred to second generation strategies' focus on *human resources development* as the central issue. This approach to development, in line with the communal perspective highlighted in the quote that follows above, assumes that the problem lies exclusively in the individual's lack of skills and physical strength. It is therefore a matter of developing the economic resource value of a person, that will naturally lead to opportunities for gainful employment in the economic system (1990: 119).

> organization, consciousness raising, small loans and the introduction of simple new technologies. (1990: 119)

With the above words Korten's assessment of the progressive nature of second generation strategies of development would end. Having hinted in this passage at a remaining paternalistic attitude and outside agenda on the part of the NGOs, Korten's further evaluation of second generation development strategies largely overlaps with the position in the second perspective in the NGO development debate above. Whereas second generation interventions assume a progressive empowerment approach, they, according to Korten, often in practice constitute "little more than handouts in a more sophisticated guise". They bring a long-term *dependence* on the assisting NGO to effect and give little more than lip service to the principle of self-reliance (ibid).

In essence, the underlying assumptions of second generation strategies often remain overly simplistic, even those of a more political nature that attempt to confront local power relations. Whereas NGOs, in this frame of reference, view the problem as resulting from a combination of a lack of development of the individual *and* patterns of exploitative power relationships at the local level (according to this approach the problem of poverty thus also has a distinct political dimension), they, however, neglect the larger picture. Commonly assuming that village organisations of the poor can, by their own initiative, mobilise sufficient political resources to change the relevant political power structures, these NGOs, as a rule, *fail to relate the local power structures of society to the larger institutional and policy context*. They fail to take into account the factor of larger national and international systems through which local structures of power are maintained and against which even the strongest village organisations are relatively powerless (1990: 120; also 1987: 148). Their scope of attention remains limited to *individual* villages and neighbourhoods and the specific *local* groups they come to assist (1987, ibid).

4.2.3 Generation three: sustainable systems development

Against the background of a critical view of second generation development strategies, third generations strategies can be closely identified with the notions of 'scaling-up' and 'mainstreaming' in the fourth perspective in the NGO development debate above. Third generation strategies, according to Korten, "*look beyond the*

individual community and seek changes in specific policies and institutions at local, national and international levels" (1990: 120; italics added). They represent a strategic orientation that often grows out of NGOs frustration with the limitations (unsustainability!) of second generation strategies[21] and are based on a growing realisation that: (i) the benefits generated by its village interventions depend on a continued (unsustainable!) NGO presence and availability of donor subsidies and (ii) acting on its own, the latter interventions can never hope to benefit more than a few favoured localities. The conclusion that can be made here, is that "*(s)elf-reliant village development initiatives are likely to be sustained only so long as they are linked into a supportive national development system*" (italics added) (1990: ibid; also 1987: 148-149).

According to Korten, the underlying theory of third generation development strategies is thus grounded "in an assumption that local inertia is sustained by structures that centralize control of resources, keep essential services from reaching the poor, and maintain systems of corruption and exploitation" (1990: 121). This recognition brought a growing number of NGOs, most notably in the mid-1980s (see 1987: 150)[22], to the realisation that they need "to exert greater leadership in addressing dysfunctional aspects of the policy and institutional setting of the villages and sectors within which they worked". It means moving to a *third* generation strategy in which the focus is "on facilitating sustainable changes in these settings on a regional or even national basis" (1987: 149).

Third generation strategies, therefore, imply *less* direct involvement at village level and greater involvement with a variety of public and private organisations that control resources and policies that have a direct impact on local development (ibid). It requires NGOs to work in *catalytic, foundation-like roles*, rather as operational service providers at the local level (1990: 121; 1987, ibid). Taking on various forms, it may,

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[21] As in the case of second generation strategies, that more often build on NGOs' experience in first generation strategies (see again the beginning of 4.2.2), third generation strategies thus also more likely presume NGOs' experience in second generation strategies.

[22] Whereas it is possible, according to Korten, to recognise a longer history of NGO activity influencing policy and institutional changes (see 1987: 150), he more pertinently pointed to the mid-1980s as the period which saw a substantial shift of NGOs to third generation modes of involvement (ibid). See his list of NGOs, particularly in the context of Asia, that, according to him, had in this period progressed to third generation development strategies (1990: 120-121; 1987: 150).

broadly speaking, involve NGOs in working with major national agencies to assist them in reorientating "their policies and work modes in ways to strengthen broadly based *local* control of resources" (italics added). Moreover, it may also involve them in the creation of *new institutions* of meaningful size "to provide essential local services on a sustained, self-financing basis" (1990: 120).

Ideally, as it becomes possible for NGOs in third generation strategies to *influence* rather than *control* the organisations with whom they are working (1987: 149), their success hinges on a number of factors. Firstly, it compels them to *acquire in-depth knowledge* of the system at work. Secondly, it compels them to *build relationships* with the system's key players and develop the necessary technical and strategic competence to establish their credibility with them. In this relational sense, it also requires of them (especially those that have historically worked independently) to develop skills in working collaboratively with both public and private organisations. It challenges them to work in one way or another *with government*, with whom they (i.e. NGOs of a more critical disposition, particularly in the South) have more often stood in relationships of mutual suspicion, if not outright hostility. Thirdly and importantly it requires of them the skillful *management of their limited resource base*, positioning and repositioning such resources where it may have the best prospect of changing system dynamics in the desired direction (1990: 121; 1987, ibid).

4.3 Theoretical and strategic innovation

4.3.1 People-centred development agenda

> Tim Brodhead[23] argues that it is impossible to be a true development agency without a theory that directs action to the underlying causes of underdevelopment. In the absence of a theory, the aspiring development agency almost inevitably becomes instead merely an *assistance* agency engaged in relieving the more visible symptoms of underdevelopment through relief and welfare measures. The assistance agency that acts without a theory also runs considerable risk of inadvertently strengthening the very forces responsible for the conditions of suffering and injustice that it seeks to alleviate through aid... For the same reasons, an organization cannot have a meaningful *strategy* without a development theory. To maintain that an organization has a strategy is to claim that there is a well thought out logic behind the way in which

[23] See Korten (1990: 128, n. 2).

> it positions its resources. This logic must make explicit the organization's assumptions regarding the forces that sustain the problem condition it is addressing, and the points of system vulnerability at which an intervention will create a new and more desirable equilibrium of forces. (Korten 1990: 113-114)

Korten significantly introduced his outline of three generations of NGO development action with the above argument. He proclaimed that NGO strategic development action could not be viewed by itself. It necessarily implies a particular *theory* of development or logic that informs the strategic thinking or way of intervention. It is the absence of such a theory that results in NGOs' confinement to first generation strategies of relief and welfare interventions, the latter being a mode of action that cannot assume the qualification of being *development* action as it is not informed or guided by any critical theoretical input on the causes of persisting underdevelopment and poverty in society and the systemic and policy changes required to overcome such problems.

As implied by the above words of Korten, the question of critical and appropriate NGO development strategy goes much deeper to also assume the question of a critical, appropriate and *general* theory of development (i.e. a theoretical framework and contents that give the substance of the strategic considerations in the NGO development debate). In terms of Korten's own generational framework, whereas no meaningful theory of development can be assumed in the case of first generation strategies, it can, in the case of second generation strategies, only *partially* be assumed. Second generation strategies, in contrast with third generation strategies, lack a wider orientation, a *critical* development theory that might orientate the NGOs that are involved in linking their local development efforts to *larger* processes and structures that directly influence such efforts. As Korten suggested in one of his most recent writings, second generation strategies assume an incomplete and restricted theoretical perspective that fails to move the NGOs involved to adopt strategies that are necessarily of a wider *policy*-oriented nature:

> Some NGOs have equated... development with participatory village development interventions. Such interventions are important, but in themselves are generally inconsequential... We now realize that in one respect the World Bank and the other big donors are right. Policies are important... Without the right policies, irrespective of how many village development activities NGOs carry out or how many courses they

> offer with titles such as consciousness raising or empowerment, there will be no consequential change. (1995: 178)

Against this background Korten's thinking about third generation development strategies can be identified with a wider corpus of theoretical reflections on development known as *people-centred development*[24]. Restricting ourselves in this subsection (4.3.1) largely to the writings of Korten, in which the focus has been on the strategic development roles of NGOs from a people-centred development perspective[25] and on the notion of people-centred development *per se*, this concept of development indicates, according to Korten, "*a process by which the members of a society increase their personal and institutional capacities to mobilize and manage resources to produce sustainable and justly distributed improvements in their quality of life consistent with their own aspirations*" (1990: 67; italics retained). As evident from this definition, people-centred development can be defined as fundamentally value-oriented and include in its framework the principles of *justice*, *sustainability* and *inclusiveness* (1990: 67-68; see also Korten 1995: 173). Its explicit goal is that of "human growth defined in terms of greater realization of human potentials" (Korten 1984: 300) that demands the authentic *participation* of every human being in the pro-

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[24] This is a theory of development that we determine here to be conceptualised firstly in Korten's own writings, but that can also be applied more widely to a substantial series of other writings on development that (i) in some cases assume the concept and idea frame of people-centred development and (ii) in other cases again directly and explicitly relate to this concept and idea frame.

In the case of the first category of a wider corpus of writings, the publication of importance here is the book, *People-Centred Development: Contributions toward Theory and Planning Frameworks*, edited jointly by David Korten and Rudi Klauss and published in 1984. Rather than constituting a compilation of essays written in view of a specific occasion or publication, this book draws on the writings of numerous authors that were formerly published as chapters and essays in books and articles in journals. They, as the subtitle of the book might also suggest, constitute writings of note in the field of development studies and related social sciences. Although in most cases not explicitly applying the term people-centred development, these writings are taken by the editors of the book as making important contributions to the theoretical and planning framework of people-centred development thinking.

In the case of the second category, the publication of note is the book, *Government-NGO Relations in Asia: Prospects and Challenges for People-Centred Development*, edited by Noeleen Heyzer et al. in 1995. Comprising essays by various writers including Korten himself, this publication, as the title suggests, focuses on the important theme of government-NGO relations in development work, notably from the point of view of a distinct people-centred development agenda.

[25] The two publications of importance here are Korten's article, "Third Generation NGO Strategies: A Key to People-centred Development", and his book, *Getting to the 21st Century*, that have been taken as the initial basis of the discussion in this chapter. See, however, also the last part of Korten's essay, "Steps Toward People-Centred Development: Vision and Strategies", in the book mentioned in the last paragraph of the previous footnote in which Korten again discussed the NGO sector's contribution to a people-centred development agenda (see 1995: 182-189).

ductive activity and decision-making processes in his/her immediate society (1984: 300-301). It is "grounded in a world view that perceives earth to be a life-sustaining spaceship with a finite store of physical resources" (1990: 68). Its dominant logic is one of a "balanced human ecology" (1984: 300), that determines that the quality of life of the earth's inhabitants "depends on maintaining a proper balance between its solar energized regenerative systems, its resource stocks and the demands that its inhabitants place on these systems and resources" (1990: 68). It pertains to a notion of development in which the principles of human participation and self-reliance, on the one hand, and environmental sustainability, on the other, mutually determine each other. Set forth as ideal by Korten in the following way:

> Our challenge is to create a global system that is biased toward the small, the local, the cooperative, the resource-conserving, and the long-term - one that empowers people to create a good living in balance with nature. (1995a: 270)

According to Korten, people-centred development thus represents an "alternative development paradigm" (1984: 299; cf. 1987: 146). At the very core of its understanding, as meaningfully captured in the preceding quote, is what Korten and others[26] would refer to as a *territorial* perspective[27]. It involves a perspective that stands directly opposed to what can be called the *functional* perspective in reigning transnational capitalist organisation[28] and conventional growth-centred development policies in which the emphasis falls on economies of *unlimited scale* that transcend national interests and commit themselves primarily to the search for new profits and market share in the name of economic progress and development (Korten 1995: 170;

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[26] Reference can here in particular be made to the essays by George Carner and Korten, John Friedmann, and David Morris in Part 6 of *People-Centred Development: Contributions Toward Theory and Planning* (see again footnote 24): "Planning Frameworks for People-centred Development" (Korten and Carner, pp. 201-209); "Agropolitan Development: A Territorial Approach to Meeting Basic Needs" (Friedmann, pp. 210-222); "The Self-Reliant City" (Morris, pp. 223-239). See also how Korten and Carner (1984: 208-209, 326, n. 10) base their exposition of the territorial perspective on a book by Friedmann and Clyde Weaver, *Territory and Function: The Evolution of Regional Planning* (published in 1979 by University of California Press).

[27] For an identification of the principle of territorialism specifically with the notion of 'alternative development' or 'another development' (i.e. a notion of development that as suggested by Korten above, presumes the concept of people-centred development), see the references in footnote 35 below.

[28] It is pointed out from a critical people-centred development point of view that in the functional perspective, the phenomenon of the *transnational corporation* can be taken as the ultimate expression or point of reference (Korten and Carner 1984: 208). See in this regard also Korten's latest book, *When Corporations Rule the World* (West Hartford: Kumarian Press, 1995), a work that Korten came to define as representing the culmination point of his own intellectual journey (see "Prologue: A Personal Journey", pp. 1-14).

also Korten and Carner 1984: 208; Korten 1984: 306).

Against such functional disposition showing *little loyalty to either place or people* (Korten 1995: 171; Korten and Carner, ibid; see also Korten 1995a: 249-257), the territorial perspective in the people-centred development theoretical framework can be defined as *the logic of local self-reliance*, that is, "the logic of place, people, and resources bound into locally, self-sustaining human ecological systems" (Korten 1984: 307). In the people-centred framework, this logic presents the only solution to what is to be seen as the "threefold crisis" of ongoing and escalating poverty, environmental destruction and communal violence/social disintegration in contemporary global society (see Korten 1995: 165-167; 1995a: 18-23, 261-262; 1990: 13-16)[29]. The concept of development highlighted here, consequently, is that of maximum *differentiation* and *diversity*, vis-à-vis the standardisation and uniformity associated with economic globalisation. Stressing that the former arrangement of development can be the only foundation for true human flourishing and developmental (evolutionary) progress, Korten wrote:

> It appears to be a near universal truth that diversity is the foundation of developmental progress in complex systems and uniformity is the foundation of stagnation and decay.[30]
>
> Standardization and uniformity seem to be almost inevitable outcomes of a globalized economy dominated by massive globe-spanning corporations geared to mass production and marketing in a culturally homogenized world... The processes of economic globalization are not only spreading mass poverty, environmental devastation, and social disintegration, they are also weakening our capacity for constructive social and cultural innovation at a time when such innovation is needed as never before... By contrast, economic systems composed of locally rooted, self-reliant economies create in each locality the political, economic, and cultural spaces within which people are able to find their own paths to the future that are consistent with their

[29] In all the writings of Korten referred to here, the 1980s is being indicated as the period of substantial intensification of the mentioned threefold crisis.

[30] For Korten an important source in this regard is Arnold Toynbee's study of the growth and decline of the world's great civilisations. According to Toynbee's finding, civilisations in decline have been consistently characterised by a "tendency toward standardization and uniformity", whereas civilisations during stages of growth have rather been characterised by "the tendency toward differentiation and diversity" (Korten 1995a: 268-269).

> distinctive aspirations, history, culture and ecosystems. *A global system composed of localized economies can accomplish what a single globalized economy cannot – encourage the rich and flourishing diversity of robust cultures and generate the variety of experience and learning that is essential to the enrichment of the whole.* (1995a: 269; italics added)

However, it would be stressed by Korten that people-centred development goes beyond a mere decentralisation of economic and political structures (1987: 147; 1984: 301). Its emphasis on local decision-making and control (Korten 1984, ibid) and the need to create conditions of production that would enable people of a particular area to meet their own needs by using local resources and local control (Korten 1984: 307; also 1995: 179-180), is not to be confused with self-sufficiency, isolation or the closing of local borders. Nor does it involve a denial of modern technology *per se* (1984, ibid; also 1995: 180).

People-centred development, to the contrary, seeks to build *a global system of interlinked diversified local economies that will be largely economically and ecologically self-reliant in meeting their own basic needs but that would also function as elements of a larger whole.* Rather than seeking to optimise impersonal economies of scale, the designed system would be seeking "to optimise the release and application of the creative and social energies of people who work together and with a shared sense of community and mutual contribution". In this arrangement the primary role of the links between local self-reliant economies would be to facilitate the free flow and sharing of information and beneficial technology (Korten 1995, ibid). It points to a local-global arrangement that can, according to Korten, be very well captured along the following lines of advice that were once put forward by John Maynard Keynes, one of the fathers of modern economic theory:

> Ideas, knowledge, art, hospitality, travel - these are the things which should of their nature be international. But let goods be homespun whenever it is reasonably and conveniently possible; and above all, let finance be primarily national.[31] (see Korten 1995, ibid)

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[31] Quoted originally in the book by Herman Daly and John Cobb, *For the Common Good: Redirecting the Economy toward Community, the Environment, and a Sustainable Future* (published in 1989 by Beacon Press), p. 209.

Seen from a different angle and clear structural and policy perspective, a central aim of people-centred development can furthermore be defined to overcome the *urban bias* in world development (see Lipton 1984: 152-156[32]). It points to what someone like John Friedmann had come to call *agropolitan development*: a territorial approach to development deliberately aiming to overcome the contradictions between city and countryside through the diversification of area economies, the redirection of basic infrastructure and resources to the countryside and the development of domestic (local and regional) mass markets (1984: 215-217). Also appropriately defined by Korten as an *equity-led sustainable growth strategy* (see 1990: 72-82), the essential logic is here to be found in the "choice of priorities for the sequencing of development interventions" (Korten 1990: 81). The aim here would be to radically *revert the sequence* followed in conventional export-oriented growth strategies. It implies that domestic mass markets are to be created, not by foreign demand for the products of low-cost labour, but by increasing agricultural productivity and industrial diversification in decentralised locations with an emphasis on labour-using and capital-saving technologies (Friedmann 1984: 217; Korten 1990: 76). Thus involving what Korten called "a broadly based integrative approach to rural development that avoids the creation of economic enclaves" (ibid), the following sequential pattern (stages) are to be followed in which urban industrialisation and export promotion only represent the *last* stages in the development process on the basis of substantial increases in *rural* productivity, incomes and industry (see ibid)[33]:

* Stage I: *Preparation for change* - the creation of a political and institutional context that allows for the successful implementation of the asset reform measures to be

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[32] The reference here is to Michael Lipton's essay, "Urban Bias in World Development", in *People-Centred Development: Contributions toward Theory and Planning Frameworks*, that meaningfully complements those essays listed in footnote 26 and also published in the latter book.

[33] According to Korten the economic successes of the three 'Asian Tigers' - Taiwan, South Korea and Japan - have been based on such a model of development (see 1995: 181-182; 1990: 73-77). The arguments that attribute their successes to export-led growth, Korten argued, are based more on misrepresentation to bolster an ideological position than on reality (1995: 181; also 1990: 73). While the experiences of these countries provide only a partial model for a people-centred development strategy, as they do not serve as models of environmentally sustainable development and democratic political process, they nevertheless provide "a useful framework for making growth more broadly-based, integrated, equitable and economically sound" (1990: 74). Capturing the essence of such a growth strategy, Korten observed:

> Well before the 'Asian Tigers' became successful exporters, each instituted radical land reform, made massive investments in basic education, created dense networks of rural organizations, and stabilized their populations with effective family planning programmes. These actions integrated their economies and provided the foundation for broad-based participation in the benefits of economic growth. (1995: 182)

introduced in Stage II.

* Stage II: *Asset reform and rural infrastructure* - giving people access to productive resources through the implementation of a redistribution of productive assets, especially land reform, massive investments in basic education, investment in the basic infrastructure to open up remote rural areas and reduce communication costs, strengthening rural communication links to reduce rural isolation, etc. (This stage is, according to Korten, to be regarded as the heart of the overall strategy of equity-led sustainable growth.)

* Stage III: *Agricultural intensification and diversification* - increasing rural productivity and incomes, whereby local markets are strengthened for basic products that are within the production capacity of small rural industries.

* Stage IV: *Rural industrialisation* - the stage in which the rural economy moves from a primary reliance on agriculture to a more sophisticated rural economy able to capture a large portion of the value-added potential of agricultural production.

* Stage V: *Urban industrialisation* - the gradual shifting of priorities to expanding urban industries that have strong backward and forward linkages to the rural agricultural and industrial sectors, the consolidation of a country's technical base and strengthening of its competitive efficiency (i.e. the production of more sophisticated products by using advanced technologies that, by this stage, the domestic economy should be able to command).

* Stage VI: *Export promotion* - encouraging the use of residual production capacity for export to foreign markets with products that have a high value-added relative to their content of physical and environmental resources (1990: 78-81; see also 1995: 182; Friedmann 1984: 215-218).

It is clear from the above that people-centred development is not to be conceived in a kind of other-worldly language that cannot be translated in terms of conventional development and modernisation discourse. Korten concluded in one of his reflections on this notion of development that if people-centred development was to emerge, it will be "as an offspring of the production-centred industrial era". It will be "conceived in the knowledge, possibilities, and necessities created by that era" (1984: 309). Yet, it will redirect and apply these human achievements in an alternative policy and structural framework and in terms of alternative ideas, values, social

techniques and technologies (see ibid) to bring about what the conventional paradigms of development and modernisation have fallen short of: to create truly people-centred, humane, just and sustainable societies without forsaking the ideals of a modern world. In the words of John Friedmann, an exponent of the people-centred development theoretical framework[34] whose following exposition of agropolitan development well captures the conceptualisation of an *alternative* notion of development (in the structural and policy sense) within a remaining *modernisation* paradigm:

> If the countryside is endowed with basic infrastructure - for instance, if an internal communications and transport network is built up that will connect agropolitan districts and regions with each other - large cities will lose their present overwhelming advantage. The economy will then turn inward upon itself, discover its hidden energies and assets, and, in a "natural" learning progression, modernize itself from within.
>
> Manufacturing industry will be second in a logical sequence of steps. The first is the continuous upgrading of agricultural productions, starting with overall increases in the physical volume of food and basic fibres, followed, in due course, by increases in the productivity of farm land and the productivity of workers.
>
> The development industry will be tied into this sequence, beginning with agricultural processing and going on to the manufacture of tools and other equipment of use to peasants and workers in their daily lives. Dispersed among the villages and fields, small industries will provide a source of work and income, in a mode of production that is intimately related to the emerging agropolitan structure of society in which the contradictions of industrial capitalism - between city and countryside, production and consumption, work and leisure - are progressively resolved. (1984: 217-218)[35]

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[34] See again pp. 117-118 and footnote 26.

[35] While taking a central place in an explicit people-centred development corpus, it can be noted that the ideas akin to agropolitan development have in fact been part of a longer and broader intellectual history in development and socio-economic thinking. See e.g. Björn Hettne's identification of the principles of territorialism, cultural pluralism and ecological sustainability as the dimensions central to the broader intellectual movement of 'Another Development' in his book, *Development Theory and the Three Worlds* (see 1995: 199-206). As important additions to Hettne's reference list, see also Trainer (1995: 56-73), Kothari (1995: 128-131) Omo-Fadaka (1975: 23-52) and Schumacher (1993: chap. 13 esp. - * = later edition of his book, *Small is Beautiful*, that was originally published in 1973).

See in addition also a further article by John Friedmann, "Modular Cities: Beyond the Rural-Urban Divide", that was published in the special issue on the theme of "Future cities" in the journal *Environment and Urbanisation* (Vol. 8, No. 1, 1996, pp. 129-131) in preparation for Habitat II, the second UN conference on Human Settlements in 1996. See in this article, furthermore, Friedmann's reference (notes 1 and 2, p. 130) to a longer history of thinking along the lines of an agropolitan development: Kropotkin, P (1898), *Fields, Factories and Workshops*, Howard, E (1902), *Garden Cities of Tomorrow*; Lewis, M (1938), *The Culture of Cities*; Lloyd Wright, F (1945), *When Democracy Builds*; Friedmann, J (1981, 1985), *Life Space and Economic Space*.

4.3.2 Politics of scaling-up and mainstreaming

Following from the discussion so far, a people-centred development agenda clearly anticipates Korten's notion of third generation development strategies. It is an agenda that requires from its development actors, in this case most notably NGOs, to *scale up* and *mainstream* their development activities in order to make a decisive impact on the policy and institutional environment in favour of a people-centred development policy and institutional regulation. Formulated in one of Korten's most recent discussions of the people-centred development theoretical framework, "(a)n integral part of the policy agenda of people-centred development... [is] to reverse the tendency toward concentrating power in impersonal and unaccountable institutions, returning it to people and communities and assuring its equitable distribution". It emphasises *local organising* and aims at advancing the empowerment process through the development of "member-accountable institutions and strengthening local resource control and ownership" (1995: 178-179).

Korten furthermore determined that progress toward people-centred development at the same time required "fundamental structural reforms at *national* and *global* levels" (italics added). At the national level it requires "breaking down dualistic economic structures, integrating the modern and traditional sectors and melding, redistributing and reallocating the use of their assets". At the global level it means "breaking the unchallenged and unaccountable power of transnational capital and bringing transnational corporations under a system of controls and incentives that make them useful, accountable contributors to the creation of a just, sustainable, and inclusive human society" (1995: 179).

It is significant to note that the above perspectives on scaling-up and mainstreaming in NGO development action come from an essay by Korten[36] in the already mentioned book, *Government-NGO Relations in Asia: Prospects and Challenges for People-Centred Development*[37]. As the title of this book suggests, the prospects and challenges for people-centred development have come to be viewed by adherents of this theoretical framework in terms of the question of government-NGO relations. Stated differently, these authors, who have come to favour the NGO sector as *primary*

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[36] "Steps toward People-Centred Development: Vision and Strategies"

[37] See again footnote 24 (3d par.).

actors in the people-centred development agenda (see Heyzer 1995: 1, 5; Korten 1995: 182-188; Korten and Quizon 1995: 131-132; Riker 1995: 15-16, 52; 1995a: 94, 114, 124-125; 1995b: 192), identified *government* as a central actor in the national and international development arena that cannot be side-stepped in NGOs' endeavour towards what may be called third generation development strategies. The quest for this mode of involvement inevitably brings NGOs to the challenge of engaging themselves in the harsh world of official politics and development policy. As articulated by the following perspectives in this publication:

Firstly, a central perspective to emerge from the collective set of essays in this book, is that government has to be regarded as an actor of remaining crucial importance in development, not the least in a *people-centred* development agenda. As various authors in this collection have come to a similar conclusion, NGOs cannot be considered as "a replacement for government delivery systems" (Bhatt 1995: 88); government also has an essential role to play in a just, sustainable and inclusive society (Korten and Quizon 1995: 161); the ideal of people-centred development can only be realised in the case of a collective and collaborating effort between government and the NGO sector (Heyzer 1995: 12; Riker 1995a: 121; 1995b: 198):

> In order to realize at least a more conducive, if not a potentially more enabling policy environment for people-centred development, it is imperative that joint action by institutional actors from both state and civil society be fully explored. Thus, this task requires a fresh look and analysis of the state-of-the art in terms of government-NGO relations. (Riker 1995a: 95)

However, this view does not do away with the fact that existing NGO-government relationships and the current role of government in bringing about people-centred development, has to be seen as considerably *problematic.* As stated by Korten and Antonio Quizon, while the idea is not to do away with government, the purpose of third generation strategies is to reduce government's "pervasive presence and control, gradually absorbing it into new systems of relationships consistent with the people-centred vision that assures its accountability and responsiveness to the people from which it derives its authority" (1995: 160). These two authors and other contributors to the present volume concluded that the current role of government in development had to be seen, from a people-centred development perspective, as far from ideal.

Government's basic impetus has rather been to *control*, *manage* and *coopt* the development process[38] (Riker 1995: 19, 34-36; 1995a: 105-106; 1995b: 196).

Consequently, although representing a prevailing force in any development agenda, it was doubtful whether, in current collaborative arrangements, a common vision of development could really be assumed between governments and donors and those NGOs that aspire to bring about people-centred development. Korten and Quizon well captured this problematique in their essay by suggesting that the former (i.e. governments and donors) acted rather as proponents of the *growth-centred vision* of development, as opposed to the people-centred development vision[39]:

> Any effort to improve working relationships between NGOs, governments, and donors must eventually come to grips with their different perceptions about the nature of development. To what extent are NGOs, governments and donors actually working toward the same goal? Should NGOs accept official commitments to human resource development strategies as a demonstration that governments and donors have accepted a people-centred philosophy? As NGOs become more dependent on official donors and more active in relations with governments, which agenda is likely to prevail? How can NGOs broaden official acceptance for their alternative agenda? (1995: 131-132; see also 141; Korten 1995: 173; Riker 1995b: 203-205)

Following from Korten and Quizon's last question, a central strategic concept in all the essays in the above-mentioned book, is James Riker's recognition of the need for NGOs, people's organisations and other groups in civil society to create *political space* for independent initiatives vis-à-vis government and the state (1995: 23). Not discarding the ideal of authentic cooperative NGO-government relationships, and the reliance on government itself to bring about the above-mentioned political space, this concept presumes a development and policy environment in which the former group of actors organise and operate freely and increase political participation to (successfully) influence and press such environment (including government) towards people-centred development (see Riker 1995: 23-24, 36-40, 42-48; 1995a: 94-95, 123-

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[38] See also Korten's notion of the 'dominant state' in *Getting to the 21st Century?* (1990: 50-51, 156-161), that correlates well with this description of the general nature of government's participation in development.

[39] In accordance with the basic distinction between growth-centred and people-centred approaches to development in people-centred development thinking (as should be evident from the discussion in 4.3.1), the notion of growth-centred development also constitutes the counterpoint to the idea of people-centred development in the book under discussion here. For more detailed juxtapositions of the two paradigms, see besides Korten and Quizon's essay (1995: 134-141), the essays by Heyzer (1995: 8-10), Korten (1995: 167-180) and Riker (1995b: 203-204).

125, 127-128; 1995b: 201-205; Korten and Quizon 1995: 160-161).

We may close our exposition of this first perspective by referring to the above-mentioned authors' observation of the NGO sector's *partial success* in obtaining such actual political space (thus akin to Korten's conclusion with regard to third generation NGO development strategies). Chandra de Fonseka and James Riker concluded in their respective essays that the growing dissatisfaction of international funding and large donor agencies (notably the World Bank but also USAID, CIDA, etc.) with Third World government performance and capability and these agencies' demand for greater direct involvement by NGOs in development in the 1980s and 1990s (vis-à-vis governments), were opening significant challenges to expand the social and political space for people-centred development (this notwithstanding the fact that there are prevailing ideological differences between agents of a people-centred development vision and governments and donors as mentioned earlier) (De Fonseka 1995: 64-75; Riker 1995a: 94-95; 1995b: 194; see also Korten 1995: 165; Riker 1995b: 204). As Anil Bhatt also concluded in his essay on "Asian NGOs in Development", "if influencing government policies, laws and legislations... [could be] considered a political role, then NGOs particularly in the latter half of the 1980s... performed this role too, with some notable success" in Asian countries. These included NGOs' success in influencing government to adapt policies on women, forestry and drug banning (1995: 86).

Yet, as Bhatt captured a common consensus amongst all the various contributors, NGOs' role in influencing development policies remains limited and of recent origin. Most organisations in this sector, despite the above-mentioned progress, are still preoccupied with their grassroots work (i.e. Korten's second generation strategies - cf. Heyzer 1995: 7) and hardly have "the time, resources or inclination to go beyond their projects and micro-level issues". This author continued to list the following criteria which necessarily have to be taken into account in the quest for scaling-up and mainstreaming NGO development activity: influencing policy requires "careful data collection and analysis, expertise in alternative policy formulation, coalition building with other NGOs, campaigning, advocacy skills, and a willingness to confront vested interests and the establishment, as well as to withstand the allegations that they are getting involved in politics" (ibid).

The challenges faced by development-oriented NGOs in scaling-up and mainstreaming towards third generation development strategies could therefore be considered as vast and by no means a concluding fact. It is in this regard that a *second* perspective can be linked to Korten and Quizon's self-critical statement that the focus of the present volume on government, NGOs and donors is in fact inappropriate, given the inherent nature of people-centred development. As this statement can be critically related to the above first perspective, the quest for people-centred development calls for a strategic orientation focusing on a range of actors *wider* than the confined triangle of government, NGOs and donors:

> Indeed, it might be argued... that the focus of this book on government, NGOs and donors is inappropriate. The primary actors are people's organizations, with the government, business and voluntary sectors playing supporting roles. Yet people's organizations are not even mentioned in our agenda, nor are they represented here. We have also left out the business sector altogether. Donor roles and involvement, which we have chosen to highlight, are decidedly residual and temporary in a people-centred development strategy. (Korten and Quizon 1995: 157)

Mentioning two further actors in the development process, namely *people's organisations* (POs) and *business*, Korten and Quizon and other authors in the volume would come to highlight the central place of POs, or what Korten in a subsequent essay in the volume called the *fourth sector* (see Korten 1995: 187-188), as the actual *primary* actors in the development process. Along with government, these authors emphasised that NGOs could only be regarded as *secondary* actors in people-centred development. They need "to be accountable to the people, who are simultaneously the principal players and beneficiaries of development" (Riker 1995b: 196). Defined best by De Fonseka, *in people-centred development POs constitute the principal actors, and NGOs secondary, intermediate, supportive and catalytic entities*. This implies that NGOs are *dispensable* entities and that the role of an authentic NGO is "to work itself out of its role by investing its powers, capability and expertise in its wards, the primary organizations" (1995: 70). It spells out the following twofold role for development-oriented NGOs in their relations to POs: (i) They are challenged to help prepare and build the POs to which they relate "as small democratic self-managing units able to emerge from their conditions of semi-marginalization into the mainstream market economy" and (ii) they are challenged to bring these organisations

into the political life of the community where, as part of civil society, "they could exercise democratic control and mastery over their leaders at local and national levels" (1995: 70-71).

According to Korten and Quizon, the primary importance rendered to people's organisations or the fourth sector in people-centred development, ultimately requires of NGOs to participate in what can be called *movement building*. Anticipating in this regard Korten's conceptualisation of fourth generation NGO development strategies that will be the focus of discussion in the next chapter[40], it can be said that the idea of development-oriented NGOs' participation in 'movement building' in two ways closely relate to the notion of third generation development strategies. It firstly calls on such NGOs to transcend the concentration on isolated community development projects, which have traditionally been highly operational with little concern for or awareness of policy issues. It secondly, in so far as a (fourth generation) movement politics can be reconciled with the policy emphasis in third generation development strategies, calls on NGOs to actively support, build and participate in a transformative people's movement against what the above-mentioned two authors refer to as the current mainstream "policies defined within a self-destructive development system" (1995: 159-160). Seeing the realisation of such a transformative movement as an emerging reality, in which concepts such as *networking*, *coalition-building*, *relationships* and *organising structure* now take central stage, Korten and Quizon stated:

> They [the NGOs] are beginning to join forces within ever-growing and evolving networks and coalitions in what is emerging as a social transformation movement. These involvements are pushing the more forward-looking NGOs beyond project-oriented, dependency creating relationships with individual villages toward the development of networking structures that link both NGOs and people's organizations as interdependent, self-reliant partners in complex patterns of lateral relationships in pursuit of major national and global agendas. The very formation of these networks and coalitions is creating a new social reality as NGOs experiment with the creation of new organizing structures based on consensus, equality and mutual accountability. (1995: 160)

[40] See inter alia 5.3.1.2 and 5.3.1.4.

Closely related to the above second perspective, but also to the first perspective, a *third* perspective to emerge from the volume under discussion, is the emphasis placed on *global or transnational strategic orientation* for those NGOs adhering to a people-centred development agenda. In this perspective, the concept of 'nation-building' is to be seen as "outdated and incomplete as it is conceived largely as a state project" (Riker 1995b: 197; see also Bhatt 1995: 87). Contrary to the concentrated focus on merely government and the state, the emphasis has now come to be on building community and (national and global) *civil society.* "This new conceptualization means shifting the development and political discourse toward civil society and the vital actors (e.g., NGOs, social movements, people's organizations) that shape it." (Riker 1995b: 198)

Yet, it is particularly in terms of the first perspective that the global or transnational strategic orientation of the third perspective acquired special significance for authors of this volume. As pointed out by Riker, the formation of transnational networks by NGOs and other international actors in areas such as the environment, human rights and international development policy, "presented a new mode for international politics" (1995b: 199). As a strategy of new alliances across national boundaries, it not only serves as an important *protecting* measure for NGOs (Heyzer 1995: 12) in their confrontations with governments and states, but also enables them to present an efficient force to counter mainstream, government-dominated development policy supported by major international donor institutions (e.g. the World Bank[41]). As argued eloquently by Noeleen Heyzer, it has become obligatory for NGOs "to go outside the boundaries of the nation state and form alliances with powerful actors on the international development scene with a similar vision of people-centred development and rely on shifts that have occurred in world public opinion on these issues". This has come to constitute the domain where NGOs could participate in international inter-governmental forums (e.g. the United Nations) and through which

[41] Authors like Bhatt and Riker argued in this volume that the penetrating effect of transnational or global strategic linkages was evident from the success that combined advocacy efforts of NGOs in the developing world with citizen groups and NGOs in the West have had in prompting the World Bank to re-examine and reorientate its own development policies and programmes (especially in the area of the environment and its support for dam and resettlement projects) and as a result, in pressurising the Bank not to give funds to national governments for particular projects (Bhatt 1995: 86-87; Riker 1995b: 199).

they could "lobby, embarrass or dialogue with governments on an equal footing" (1995: 12).

4.3.3 Macro- versus micro-policy reform

A meaning of third generation development strategies that cannot be neglected in this chapter, is Korten's distinction between the notions of macro- and micro-policy reform that he developed in a number of his earlier writings (see Korten 1986: 309-313; 1986a: 1-6) and especially in his article, "Third Generation NGO Strategies: A Key to People-Centred Development" (see 1987: 150-156).

In these publications Korten argued that *macro-policy reform* indicated a reform action "that can be accomplished through pre-emptive central action - the stroke of an authoritative pen - with minimal requirement for the development of new institutional capacities as a condition for implementation" (1986a: 1). Typically involving the many policies relating to pricing decisions, subsidies and trade regulations in the official policy arena, it usually points to a fairly clearly defined and specific decision. Once formally endorsed by the appropriate political authority, its implementation, at least from an administrative point of view, can be taken as relatively straightforward (1987: 151; 1986: 309; 1986a: 1-2).

Macro-policy reform, according to Korten, is to be directly associated with what has come to be called the 'policy analysis school of planning'. In this approach expertise has been concentrated on projecting the consequences of alternative policy choices in order to estimate which will produce the most favourable outcome (1987, ibid; 1986, ibid; 1986a: 2). In contrast, again, *micro-policy reform* denotes a kind of reform that depends on the accomplishment of often highly complex and difficult institutional changes for its implementation. It commonly involves the development of significant new institutional capacities and norms, a redefinition of institutional roles and relationships, and even changes in deeply held personal and professional values. Most complex in this category of policy reform, furthermore, are likely to be those calling for a sharing of power between national and local levels, and the creation of self-reliant beneficiary organisations (1987, ibid; 1986: 310; 1986a, ibid).

For Korten, while not disregarding the importance of macro-policy reform to achieve people-centred development (Korten 1987: 152), micro-policy reform captures the

heart of third generation people-centred development strategies. Congruent with the movement presumed by the notions of scaling-up and mainstreaming from the grassroots upwards, micro-policy reform indicates *a bottom-up process of changing policies, rebuilding institutional structures and supporting norms that place control in the hands of communities and develop their capacities to manage local resources and reap their benefits* (see Korten 1987: 152; 1986: 310; 1986a: 3). It points to a kind of reform that cannot merely be achieved by political leaders, top administrators and large donors in their position 'from above' (see Korten 1987: 152, 153-154; 1986: 310-311; 1986a: 2-3). It requires processes of profound value transformation to infiltrate institutions and the consciousness of people related to those institutions. It presumes a *mutual* process not only focusing on building the skills and capacities of communities 'from below', but also on bringing people in governing positions to "a reversal of existing professional and managerial practice" (Korten 1986: 311), implying practices that are necessarily supportive of the former communities.

Micro-policy reform can thus be defined as a process of achieving transformation in human and institutional orientation and capacity both on centralised and decentralised level. As a process pertaining to the level of ideas and values (thus very much in line with the approach or mode of development involvement emphasised in this study!), it belongs to what has come to be called the *social learning school of planning* (Korten 1987: 151; 1986: 310; 1986a: 2). As pointed out by Korten, as this approach emphasises expertise in *facilitating* the processes by which complex institutional changes are achieved, policy analysts now have relatively little to offer, at least in their traditional individual and technical capacity. Instead, performance in the micro-policy arena now rather depends on *the exercise of creative initiatives by many individuals* on the ground in the processes of social learning in which they collectively engage (1987: 151-152; see also 1986: 311; 1986a: 3).

Korten emphasised that micro-policy reform and the social learning processes that it presumes, depended on "the involvement of one or more *catalyst organisations* with a sustained commitment to facilitating coalition building and institutional learning" (italics added) (1986, ibid). Favouring the potential of NGOs[42] to fulfill this type of

[42] While not neglecting the need for serious capacity-building in the NGO sector (see further below in the main discussion), organisations able to meet the requirements of institutional catalysts can, according to Korten, more

catalyst role (see 1987: 154; 1986a: 6), Korten pointed out the following two key elements of this role: (i) the formation of a coalition of individuals committed to change and who also bring with them the resources of a number of relevant institutions and (ii) the introduction of a variety of resources of feedback on operational experience as an input to institutional learning (1987: 152). Giving some idea of the accumulated process envisaged here, based on an actual prototype third generation strategy[43], Korten wrote:

> As understanding of the resource management problem increases and possible ways of dealing with it using community management approaches are identified, one or more pilot projects are established under agency auspices to serve as learning laboratories in the development of new approaches. The pilot projects may involve one or more non-governmental development agencies assisting in the training and supervision of agency field staff - plus social scientists from one or more in-country institutions who develop site assessment methods and document implementation processes. The experimental field activities are intensively monitored by the working group, so that approaches may be modified and implications for the larger organization assessed. Through workshops, conferences, and training programs, the experience base of and the number of persons engaged in the review of these experiences is expanded. Gradually, additional learning laboratories are established that build from the experience of earlier efforts. (1987: 153; also 1986a: 4)

For Korten, however, the anticipated role of NGOs as catalysts for people-centred development and micro-policy reform, can by no means be taken as self-evident. Striking a note that has been stipulated at a number of places in this chapter[44], Korten

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likely be found amongst the thousands of development-oriented private voluntary organisations/NGOs (both international and domestic) working in Third World countries. Amongst the latter a number of organisations are to be found which "have a natural interest in micro-policy reform, view development as primarily a people to people process, and lack the inherent structural constraints faced by the large donors" (1987: 154; 1986: 313; 1986a: 6). Stated also in our own words, NGOs (as institutions of civil society) are perhaps the best suited to fulfill the role of development catalysts as they are by nature the intermediary institutions between the people (i.e. their constituency) and the official development institutions such as those of government/the state and donors.

[43] In his discussion Korten would hold up as an example, the work of the Southeast Asia Office of the Ford Foundation in irrigation and social forestry in Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand. See complementary to the quote that follows in the main discussion above, Korten's systematic exposition of the unfolding catalyst role that the latter foundation has been playing in bringing about the kind of micro-policy reform spoken about in the present subsection (4.3.3) (see 1987: 152-153; 1986: 311-312; 1986a: 4-5).

[44] With reference to the next footnote, see again the various observation on the need for greater social competence and organisational transformation in the NGO sector on p. 104 and in 4.2.3 (i.e. within a third generation mode), the point of departure of a third generation approach (i.e. the need for a critical development theoretical framework) spelled out at the beginning of 4.3.1, and the emphasis on the above-mentioned need stipulated at the end of the first perspective on scaling-up and mainstreaming in the previous subsection (see p. 125).

would come to emphasise the need for *new types and levels of technical and strategic competence* among the NGO sector itself. In the same vein he observed that this sector seemed rather to be characterised by a disdain for more hard core *managerial* approaches to development, which many NGOs traditionally viewed as lying outside their orientation and approach to development:

> Most NGOs have developed primarily in response to the altruistic desires of one or more individuals to contribute toward making a better world. They have relied on high moral purpose, good will, hard work, and common sense to make them successful. Until recently the application of effective professional management techniques, and in some instances even the acquisition of technical competence, has not been seen as relevant to their purpose. These particular NGOs are best described as being at a pre-bureaucratic stage, lacking adequate development of basic management systems and procedures. Increased budgets, geographical spread, and growth in staff are in themselves forcing many NGOs to come to terms with such deficiencies, but often with considerable reluctance... Some NGOs actively espouse an ideological disdain for management of any kind, identifying it with the values and practice of normal professionalism, and placing it in a class with exploitation, oppression, and racism... Often the distrust of management comes from associating it with centralized control-oriented bureaucratic forms of organization.[45] (Korten 1987: 155, 156)

Thus, the fundamental point of Korten would be that NGOs' aspiration to act as systems catalysts to reform micro-policy, has to be guided by more than good intentions. Scaling up to this mode of engagement means that NGOs are now to enter the world of hard core and skilled *professionalism*, notwithstanding their possible critical disposition to the underlying values of such professionalism. They are to recognise that "(s)ome of the most important of the organizations with which they work will be large, influential, and staffed by highly credential professionals" (1987: 155). Hence, they need "to obtain the *respect* of those who control the relevant technologies" (doctors, engineers, lawyers, politicians, administrators, village leaders) by showing them that "they offer a useful technical and political resource" (italics added) (ibid).

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[45] Following from this particular characterisation of the NGO sector by Korten, we may complementary to our comparative view on the churches and the NGO sector at the start of this chapter, identify the following common characteristic between these two sectors: both can be defined as development actors that are strong on moral inclination and commitment, but weak on socio-economic skills and social-technical competence. See in this regard also again footnote 14.

Drawing in particular on Robert Chambers's innovative distinction between "*normal* development professionalism" and a "*new* development professionalism"[46], such a mode of scaling-up does not mean the identification of NGOs with the narrow disciplinary specialisation associated with the former kind of professionalism. To the contrary, it can be conceptualised in terms of the latter kind of professionalism that, according to Chambers, has come to denote "the emergence of a *new* development professionalism based on alternative values[47] and offering a variety of alternative technologies, organizational forms, and management and research methods appropriate to a people-centred development" (ibid).

> These are not necessary less sophisticated, less effective, or less disciplined. To the contrary, in many respects they represent advances over normal professionalism based on a more sophisticated understanding of the nature of social and development processes. They are well suited to the purposes of most development-oriented NGOs. (ibid)

Stating the possibility of reconciling NGOs' moral disposition to development with particular managerial and technical emphases, a further profile of the organisational forms and management methods to be pursued by NGOs under the umbrella of the new development professionalism, could, according to Korten, be defined as *post-bureaucratic* or *strategic* by nature. This points to approaches to development that discourage central control and actively support self-assessment, self-correction and a well-defined sense of mission in the institutional learning process on the basis of rich information flows. Not neglecting, again, the complexity and prolonged nature of the process, as it works for change in complex and dynamic institutional systems, this fundamentally demands from NGOs (as catalysts of the process) basic skills in *social analysis* complemented by skills in *process facilitation* and *coalition building* (1987:

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[46] A distinguished specialist in the field of rural development, the writing of Chambers, used here as source by Korten, has been published as a discussion paper of the Sussex-based Institute of Development Studies, "Normal Professionalism, New Paradigms and Development" (1986). This paper, again, represents ideas that would be more fully developed in his later books, *Rural Development: Putting the Last First* (1989) (see esp. Chap. 7), and *Challenging the Professions: Frontiers for Rural Development.*

[47] That is, values alternative to the values and methods of normal development professionalism that, according to Chambers, favour the powerful over the weak, rich over poor, urban over rural, industrial over agricultural, things over people, standardisation over diversity, the controlled over the uncontrolled, quantitative over qualitative, precise measurement over visual assessment, project blueprints over adaptive learning, large scale over small scale, market-oriented producers over subsistence producers, modern technology over traditional, laboratory studies over field experience, control-oriented organisations and technocratic decision-making over people-centred organisations and decision-making (Korten 1987: 155).

156). Identifying the preceding as a remaining challenge (both in terms of capacity building and time investment) for the NGO sector as it seeks an involvement in third generation strategies, Korten concluded:

> (C)onsciously working to achieve a restructuring of social institutions is a role that remains unfamiliar to most NGOs. It represents a third generation of NGO strategic orientation, and calls for serious investment in developing the organizational capacities required to be effective in implementing such strategies. Since quick results cannot be anticipated, the NGO undertaking a third generation strategy must have the staying power to remain at the task for 10 or even 20 years if necessary. Capable leaders who combine a long-term vision with well developed skills in strategic management are essential. (ibid)

4.4 Critics of Korten and the 'New Policy Agenda'

We have started this chapter by showing how the charity-development juxtaposition that was set out in the first three chapters of this study, can significantly also be found in what can be called the NGO development debate. From this point we progressed by exploring the innovative conceptual meaning of David Korten's notion of third generation development strategies in overcoming the problem of charity and what we termed as 'insufficient' or 'less desirable' modes of development action[48] (i.e. in terms of Korten's notion of third generation development strategies, a problem that first of all and directly concerns the NGO development debate's focus on NGOs as actors of development, but that we also relate in this study to the ecumenical and general theological debate on development's quest for conceptual renewal of ecclesiastical development action).

Having completed this exercise, we contend that the discussion in this chapter cannot be complete without finally addressing the critical assessment of Korten's generational perspective (in particular on third generation strategies) and the so-called 'New Policy Agenda' in the book, *Non-Governmental Organisations - Performance and Accountability: Beyond the Magic Bullet* (edited by Michael Edwards and David Hulme and published in 1995 by Earthscan). In this book, as the title suggests, the various authors set out to critically assess the performance and accountability of development-oriented NGOs in the light of what they came to call the 'New Policy

[48] See again our highlighted conclusion on p. 106.

Agenda' in current official development politics. This, in short, is an agenda that, as authors Edwards and Hulme in their introductory essay indicated, is organised around the two reigning ideologies of economic neo-liberalism and political liberal democracy. It has increasingly come to view NGOs as *preferred channels* (vis-à-vis the state[49]) not only for providing welfare services to the poor, but also for promoting processes of *democratisation* that are to be considered as indispensable to the ideal of economic growth and development[50] (see 1995: 4).

Proceeding with our argument, the latter, second role of democratisation allocated to NGOs in the 'New Policy Agenda' can be taken as particularly relevant to the discussion in this chapter. While the underlying ideological differences between Korten and the people-centred development understanding and mainstream development policy is not to be neglected here[51], it can be said that the role of democratisation in the 'New Policy Agenda' *in principle* anticipates Korten's definition of third generation strategic development action, that is, the creation of political space[52] for people's communication and participation (see Edwards and Hulme 1995: 4) that assumes the tasks of *institutional* and *policy*

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[49] See also the reference on pp. 123-125 to this turn in current official development policy as a positive factor in rendering greater 'political space' for NGOs to achieve the people-centred agenda in development.

[50] For a more comprehensive explanation of the rationale at stake here, complementary to the rather condensed exposition by Edwards and Hulme, we may refer to Alan Fowler's important article on "Non-Governmental Organizations as Agents of Democratization: An African Perspective". In this article Fowler meaningfully indicated how a Western form of democratic representation is in fact implied here (i.e. in current mainstream official development policy) that is seen as condition for market capitalism to provide the economic growth and division of benefits required for the sustainable alleviation of poverty (1993: 326). In this rationale, furthermore, the empowerment of people and civil society (i.e. the task especially entrusted to NGOs!) in relation to the state is seen as fundamental to the regulations of privatisation and economic liberalisation. As, according to Fowler, well explained by current World Bank policy (in which NGOs have accordingly been favoured as agents of democratisation vis-à-vis the state/government):

> (E)mpowerment.. [is seen] as a process by which 'ordinary people, and especially women,... take greater responsibility for improving their lives'... In other words, a process that unburdens the state and reduces its role and some responsibilities towards citizens. This interpretation must, however, be placed within the *economic* emphasis of the Bank's report where people as entrepreneurs, rather than the state, are regarded as the economic motor of society." (italics added) (1993: 332)

[51] It can be said that in the 'New Policy Agenda' the notion of democratisation takes on a predominantly (neo-liberal) *economic* meaning, that is, the rolling back of the state, privatisation and economic liberation to successfully and efficiently enable export-led economic growth development strategies (see again also the previous footnote). In the people-centred development framework, to the contrary, democratisation rather takes on a *political* meaning, that is, the implementation of institutional and structural transformation based on the principle of territoriality (see again 4.3.1) to enable the viable introduction of *alternative* economic arrangements and strategies (i.e. alternative to the former strategies).

[52] In line with the distinction in the previous footnote, the notion of *political* space should here, however, not obscure the predominant and confined *economic* meaning/ideology which the 'New Policy Agenda' impresses on the democratisation process. See again footnote 50.

democratisation/transformation/reform. However, and this brings us more to the focal point of our argument in this closing section, against the background of such an identification of Korten's notion of third generation NGO development strategies with the democratisation role allocated to development-oriented NGOs in the 'New Policy Agenda', the following problematisation of the 'New Policy Agenda' (i.e. both the above-mentioned two roles in this agenda) and a third generation development role (by implication but also explicitly) can be found in the book under discussion:

Firstly, in this book, by means of a general overview of NGOs' performance and accountability in development, the perspective is to be found that effectively *dismisses* the claim of NGOs' successful adaptation to the modes of development involvement anticipated in the 'New Policy Agenda'. It is claimed that NGO development activity has as a general rule not met the expectation that is anticipated in the 'New Policy Agenda'. Whereas they (NGOs) have had some success in the area of micro-policy reform and in providing some services more cost-effectively than government, it can be confirmed that NGO service-provision, as a general trade mark, usually fails to reach the poorest people (Edwards and Hulme 1995: 6). Stipulating the moderate success NGOs have had particularly in the second of the above-mentioned roles (i.e. democratisation), Edwards and Hulme stated:

> (T)here is increasing evidence that NGOs and GROs do not perform as effectively as had been assumed in terms of poverty-reach, cost-effectiveness, sustainability, popular participation (including gender), flexibility and innovation... Evidence on the performance of NGOs and GROs in democratisation is more difficult to come by, except in the area of 'micro-policy' reform where a growing number of case studies demonstrate that NGOs and GROs can influence governments and official agencies, especially where they come together to form a united front... However, there is little evidence that NGOs and even GROs are managing to engage in the formal political process successfully, without becoming embroiled in partisan politics and the distortions that accompany the struggle for state power. In both Latin America and Africa, evidence shows that NGOs have had little impact on political reform, partly because NGOs themselves (as non-representative organisations) have failed to develop effective strategies to promote democratisation. (1995: 6, 7)

If only in an indirect way, it can be said that the above assessment also poses serious reservations about the actual and successful involvement by NGOs in third generation

development strategies as conceptualised by Korten. Yet, at this point we may *secondly* notice how authors of the above-mentioned book, in the context of their critical appraisal of the 'New Policy Agenda', in a *direct* way, also problematised Korten's generational perspective (as a particular contribution to the conceptual framework assumed by the latter agenda). In their own quest for conceptual clarity concerning the authentic role or roles of NGOs in development, these authors expressed their concern "about the stages... [Korten] suggested and the linear progression they supposedly represent" (Biggs and Neame 1995: 35). Stated differently, for these authors the linear view represented by Korten's generational framework poses a *false dichotomy* that should be regarded as untenable. The set categoric distinctions that it proposes, are to be regarded as seriously contradicting a *comprehensive* approach to development and human well-being.

The latter argument is more specifically cast in terms of the debate on social justice in development by authors Edwards and Hulme in their concluding essay in the volume. According to them social justice requires the capacity of people to organise themselves to defend their rights. However, it also requires that people are liberated from the conditions of material poverty. Given the scale of material poverty and the size of the gaps in access to basic services in many countries of the world, *it requires that NGOs continue to play a significant role also in service provision and welfare*. At the same time, according to Edwards and Hulme, it remains perfectly possible for NGOs to "innovate, and to retain a sense of mission, a high level of independence, and an attachment to values and principles". Hence the conclusion by them that the goals of social improvement are best served by an involvement of *diversed* and *combined* stratification, as in fact suggested by actual practices:

> There are many NGOs which play a major role in social organisation, awareness raising and advocacy; just as there are many GROs [grassroots organisations] which aim to support material improvements in their members' lives. Indeed, there are strong arguments to suggest that these functions are best combined together. (1995a: 225)

From a somewhat different angle, Stephen Biggs and Arthur Neame also presented a complementary argument in their contribution to the debate. According to them a *historical* overview suggests that "NGOs have [in fact] sought to change institutions for at least a century" (the suffragette movement for the emancipation of women and

the Anti-Slavery Society in the UK could according to them, be taken as cases in point). Rejecting on the basis of this historical fact Korten's generational perspective, in which an institutional approach to development rather indicates a relatively recent mode of NGO involvement, these two authors continued by also pointing out the counterpoint of the latter historical category of NGOs. As example could be taken the case of many NGOs (such as in the Philippines) that, while characterised by their long-standing commitment to fundamental change, have again moved from concentrating on political mobilisation to the provision of welfare and relief (in the Philippines, for instance, as a response to militarisation in 1987). As this brought Briggs and Neame to the crux of their argument, the latter shift in emphasis does not again indicate a 'backward' move on the part of those particular NGOs, as Korten's typology suggests. It simply means *a humane action that suits the needs of the context!* (1995: 35)

The above twofold problematisation should necessarily be taken into account in our own adherence to Korten's generational framework. Stated from an appreciative point of view, first of all, it is this problematisation that poses important *qualifications* to our appreciation of that conceptual framework, qualifications that in an important way reflect the *reality* of NGOs' performance in development (vis-à-vis the euphoria of a third generation of NGO development activity that apparently, are today accumulating and successfully under way) and that should serve as a corrective to a one-sidedness that may become the weakness in Korten's generational framework (or rather a straightforward reading!). However, having said this, we want to close this chapter by simultaneously stating the following in defence of Korten's model and our continuing appreciation of it as representing a most useful and appropriate framework for defining new, innovative modes of development action for those institutional actors on which this study mainly focuses, namely the churches:

Firstly, and somewhat contradicting our appreciation of the above-mentioned qualifications, we claim that the authors of the volume under discussion may well have presented us with an inaccurate reading of Korten. While we do not have any problem with the qualifications of the authors of this volume *per se*, it can be asked whether Korten in fact presented a perspective or framework so much different from what they are proposing. To answer this in the negative, there appears to be no real

difference between these author's requirement for diversed and combined stratification in NGO development activity and Korten's own emphasis on the necessity for the co-existence of the various strategic/generational orientations in contemporary NGO development action, not the least his recognition that relief efforts remain an essential and appropriate response to the emergency situations that human society are continuously faced with today (1990: 118, 1987: 148). The following words of Korten clearly go against the linear approach of which he is accused by his critics:

> These three generations do not represent precisely defined categories and are more appropriately applied to individual programs than to whole organizations. A given NGO may find that one of its programs is characterized by a third generation orientation, whereas others may be dominantly first or second generation -each responding to different needs... In any given setting it is most likely that the needs addressed by the different strategies will be met by different NGOs representing different purposes, constituencies, and competencies. NGOs pursuing third generation programming strategies will often need to give explicit attention to the development of capacities of collaborating NGOs to meet essential first and second generation needs as part of their larger system development strategy. (1987: 149)

Finally we fully adhere to the *bias* that, according to Korten's acknowledgement, ultimately defines his own position. As this author would come to answer his critics in a note in *Getting to the 21st Century*, he indeed goes along with their view that few NGOs in fact fit purely in one generation or another (i.e. a mere linear articulation) and that there is a need for all three types of programmes. "I have responded by stressing that each generation meets an important need and has its important place within the NGO family, much as the generations in a human family" (1990: 129, n. 5). Yet, and this constitutes his position, he is, despite such an acknowledgement, still convinced of the validity of the generational framework and in particular this framework's stress on the need for third and fourth generation type strategies. Korten argued that it was on these strategic modes that development as a *long-term* and *global* enterprise ultimately depended:

> I do believe that the future of development, perhaps global society, depends on many more VOs engaging boldly and effectively in the third and fourth generation type strategies discussed in this chapter than is currently the case. (ibid)

This position taken by Korten is also supported by the larger discussion in this study.

As we have attempted to show with regard to the churches, charity and local project and community development work (that correlate well with Korten's notions of first and second generation development strategies) imply much more than a mere innocent and committed outreach to the poor. Involved here are also critical questions relating to ideology, power and the lack of more sophisticated social-theoretical capacities, the need for critical self-examination and the quest to conceptualise new modes of strategic development action that might break through prevailing problematic modes of engagement.

In addition to the recognition of the prevailing inadequate and problematic strategic orientations by actors of development (especially in this case civil society actors such as the churches and NGOs) we may also state the fact that the *moderate success* of the modern enterprise of development so far, is fundamental grounds for the conceptualisation of *new* strategic development orientations. To rephrase the words of one critical development writer not directly linked to the people-centred development corpus, we are indeed a long way from an aid-free society, which is the true barometer of successful development and true community control (Dudley 1993: 161). Hence the crucial challenge to conceptualise and apply modes of strategic development action that go beyond relief and unsustainable community development orientations and work *towards* that goal.

We are emphasising in this study that the role of value- and idea-centred approaches to development, 'a politics of ideas', is crucial to the task of achieving far-reaching development and transformation. It can be concluded that Korten's conceptualising of third generation development strategies has already, to a substantial degree, steered us in that direction. From the basis of this appreciation we now take the discussion further to focus on his notion of fourth generation development strategies in the next chapter. Although it cannot neglect the necessity of third generation strategies and thus anticipates their continuing application, we propose that this notion of strategic development orientation represents the *ultimate* expression of the value- and idea-centred approaches to development mentioned above.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE DAWN OF A FOURTH GENERATION APPROACH - KORTEN

5.1 Introduction

> The critical deficiency of the third generation strategy parallels at the macro-level the deficiency that the second generation strategy displays at a more micro-level. The second generation strategy's critical flaw is that it requires countless replications in millions of communities, all within a basically hostile political and institutional context. It is much the same with third generation strategies, only at a more macro-level.
>
> Thus it is not surprising that almost since the first workshop in which I articulated the concept of the third generation strategy, thoughtful colleagues have suggested that something is missing. There had to be a further step, a fourth generation.
>
> Isagani R. Serrano of the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM) is among those who have struggled with the issue. Arguing that the unequal distribution of power and wealth at national and international levels carries major responsibility for the multiple crises gripping Southern countries, he wrote a paper suggesting that third generation strategies are only a partial answer.
>
> > Where do NGOs go from here? (from the third generation)...
> > Development theorists and practitioners must think beyond "repair work" addressed to the components of interdependent systems although they can build up from there. Their efforts at re-examination should help enable the whole international NGO community to effectively promote what the watershed NGO conference in London called the Alternative Development Paradigm.
>
> Serrano suggests that this should be the central concern of a fourth generation NGO development strategy. (Korten 1990: 123-124)

In Korten's thinking on strategic NGO development action, the concept of a *fourth generation* strategy or approach would eventually be added to his initial framework of three generations of NGO development action[1]. As this author referred to his own intellectual itinerary in the above extract from *Getting to the 21st Century: Voluntary*

[1] By way of recapitulation (see again footnotes 12 and 13 in the introduction), this is the distinct difference between Korten's discussion in his earlier article, "Third Generation NGO Strategies: A Key to People-Centred Development" (1987), and that in *Getting to the 21st Century: Voluntary Action and the Global Agenda.* As indicated in the above quote, in the latter work Korten added the notion of a fourth generation development strategy to his initial framework of three generations.

Action and the Global Agenda, he and other critical exponents of the NGO development debate, at an early stage in the generation debate, recognised the need for further conceptual innovation beyond the third generation strategy or approach. Whereas the latter remains an essential dimension to a development strategy of transformation, the central concern was (akin to second generation strategies) that an infinite number of interventions are required in the third generation mode to achieve the desired object of overall transformation[2]. Furthermore, it is questionable whether third generation interventions have enough mobilising power to match the countervailing forces of dominant national and international institutions that operate on the basis of "an invalid development vision" (Korten 1990: 123). Korten and others therefore argued that the third generation strategy or approach needed to be complemented by a *fourth* generation strategy or approach that can compensate for its (i.e. the third generation's) prevailing deficiencies. It represents a mode of further sophisticated thinking that articulate what has been termed the '*Alternative* Development Paradigm' in the NGO debate[3].

In this chapter the aim will be to explore the meaning of the fourth generation development concept presented in the writings of David Korten[4]. Constituting in accordance with the development of Korten's own argument the culmination point of our exploration into innovative strategic development conceptualisation in this study, the contents of this chapter must, however, be read as part of a cycle that also includes the discussion in the next chapter. Thus, our exploration of a fourth generation strategic development meaning will eventually also relate to a wider intellectual circle that can be taken as a further *complementary* articulation of a growing fourth generation approach to development and the question of overall (global) transformation. Traced as a discernible *normative* set of discourses in the social

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[2] See here again the second paragraph on p. 7 of this study.

[3] Thus, whereas the notion of 'an alternative development paradigm' previously defined the concept of 'third generation development strategies' in Korten's earlier writings (see the beginning of the third paragraph on p. 116), this notion has now come to define the fourth generation (as evident from Korten's adherence to Isagani Serrano's perspective stated in the above quote).

[4] In this chapter, as in the previous, Korten's discussion in *Getting to the 21st Century: Voluntary Action and the Global Agenda*, will be taken as basic point of departure. In addition, aspects of a fourth generation development meaning will also be extracted from a limited selection of Korten's writings that were used as sources in the previous chapter, particularly his essay, "Steps Toward People-Centred Development: Vision and Strategies", in the book edited by Noeleen Heyzer et al, *Government-NGO Relations in Asia: Prospects and Challenges for People-Centred Development*.

sciences that, in the historical and conceptual sense, *goes beyond the work of Korten and the NGO development debate*, the discussion (in the next chapter) will draw on discourses of development and transformation in which *features* of the fourth generation approach highlighted by Korten, stand central. In accordance with Korten's own adherence to the concept of 'alternative development' (as indicated in the quote at the start of this chapter), it will be possible to connect such further exploration of a fourth generation meaning to the notions of 'alternatives' or 'alternative development'. This could be done on the basis of not only a direct adherence to these notions by the debates/perspectives that will be explored, but more importantly also the various debates/perspectives' affiliation to a 'transformative politics' that highlights *similar* features and actors, consequently, to what can be called the *counterpoint* to the mainstream.

For now, however, the discussion will remain with Korten and the NGO development debate. It will be shown how, in Korten's fourth generation strategic framework, the relational orientation and organisational definition of development-oriented NGOs are still further refined, vis-à-vis the third generation development meaning. Whereas the theoretical and strategic *principles* that were highlighted in the third generation strategic development meaning are fully assumed in the fourth generation meaning[5], it can be noted that the people-centred development concept are still further *radicalised* in the fourth generation strategic orientation. Here we are entering the terrain of the *new social movements*, whereby individual persons and collectivities of people, marginalised by mainstream development but also conscientised and committed to the values and ideas represented by the new social movements, shift to the forefront and truly become the agents of development. Here the emphasis falls on *a 'value' and 'idea politics' that rise above the third generation strategic orientation in terms of its natural reach, the areas or elements of social life that are prioritised for transformation, the strategic orientation and skills that are required, and the kind of actors that are to be involved* (such as religious actors).

It will be shown how, in this mode of development, the phenomenon of NGOs are restricted to what Korten came to refer to as *Voluntary Organisations* and *People's Organisations*. They are *organisations that act as service organisations to the new*

[5] See again the discussion in 4.3 of the previous chapter.

people's or social movements and that realise the radical democratic principle of people-centred development by becoming the owned organisational space of people and the people's (grassroots) movements themselves. Moreover, *they are organisations that do not retreat into isolated spaces, but are politically and ethically oriented, committed to what Korten called a global people's movement that, through networking and interaction among the diversified range of like-minded NGOs, movements, individuals and other actors, are mobilising into the synergetic force that seeks to bring about people-centred development (in the comprehensive sense implied by the participation/interaction of the diverse range of actors referred to here) on a global scale.* In sum, *they are organisations for whom interaction with the government and business sectors becomes secondary (which does not mean unimportant, however), as their primary concern becomes promoting what Korten calls people-to-people interaction.*

5.2 The fourth generation: a social movements approach

According to Korten fourth generation strategies look beyond the focused initiatives of third generation strategies to change specific policies and institutional sub-systems (1990: 127). They are motivated by the perception that there is "a need to energize decentralized action toward a people-centred development vision on *a much broader scale* than is possible with the more focused interventions of either second or third generation strategies" (1990: 124; italics added).

It follows that the fourth generation strategic development orientation is informed by a theory of action that identifies an inadequate *mobilising vision* as the root cause of contemporary development failure (1990: 127). The breakthrough of people-centred development to become the dominant, *global* paradigm (see 1990: 124), can according to this recognition only be achieved through processes that might *influence the public consciousness* towards "an alternative vision adequate to mobilise voluntary action on a national or global scale" (1990: 127). A process of transformation is emphasised that "*must be achieved primarily through the power of ideas, values and communication links*" (ibid; italics added). As the fourth generation orientation highlights a *communication* strategy in which the modern system of communication is utilised as a primary instrument:

> The focus is on the communication of ideas and information through the mass media, newsletters, recorded media, school curricula, major media events, study groups and social networks of all types to energize voluntary action by people both within and outside their formal organizations in support of social transformation. (ibid)

For Korten such an idea- and value centred perspective points to a *social movement approach* to development. Development, in so far as it aspires to ideals of large-scale transformation, can find in the communicative power of the contemporary people's or social movements, the greatest potential for social change. In the field of development, however, such an identification constitutes a neglected terrain. Despite the success of people's movements in the last few decades to reshape thought and action on such issues as the environment, human rights, women, peace and population (1990: 124), development has generally not been viewed *as a movement*[6] (1990: 127). There is a striking separation between Voluntary Organisations (VOs) or NGOs that work in support of the new social movements, and those involved in *development*. The issues still appear very much separated (1990: 127-128).

According to Korten the need therefore exists to also "mobilize a people's movement around a people-centred development vision" (1990: 128). Whereas this would highlight the issue of development as such, a closer analysis of Korten's argument suggests that development is not to be viewed in isolation of the existing new social movements. The challenge here is to build "alliances with other people's movements that deal with *related* elements of the global crisis" (ibid; italics added). Development is to be seen as a matter *integrated* with the other pressing issues/values/concerns that drive the contemporary social movements[7]. While not losing its specific identity as a

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[6] For Korten this does not mean that prototypes of development-oriented people's movements cannot be found in history. According to him the literacy movement/Mass Education Movement in China in the 1920s and 1930s and the world population movement that mobilised itself under the banner of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) in the early 1950s, constitute powerful examples of national and global achievements in people-centred development (see 1990: 124-125).

[7] Such an integrated meaning is suggested by Korten's repeated reference to the new social movements (environment, human rights, women, peace, population, consumer affairs) in his exposition of the fourth generation development concept (see 1990: 124-128), while his more detailed discussion of the movements mentioned in the previous footnote, is clearly applied to the concept of (people-centred) development (see 1990: 124-125). Beyond this confined number of pages of discussion, such a reading of Korten is also clearly confirmed in the introduction of *Getting to the 21st Century?* in which it is stated that "a people-centred development vision":

> "...seeks a synthesis of the change objectives of the environmental, human rights, consumer protection, women's and peace movements. It seeks a new human consciousness in which the more nurturing, enabling and conserving dimensions of female consciousness gain ascendance over the more aggressive,

movement of *development*, the considerable overlapping with the other new social movements is to be recognised. These movements constitute the most important allies of a fourth generation people-centred development movement. The various issues around which they are mobilised, comprise *aspects* of people-centred development and secure its sustainability. In this sense, people-centred development can be taken as the overall and integrating term for the separated issues that define the various movements. There is a *common* denominator shared by all the new social movements, including an anticipated people-centred development movement: they all represent value- and idea-centred processes directed towards the well-being of *people* and the environment; they represent processes in which *people* are the actual subjects (owners) of change.

With the latter description we touched on what might be taken as the outstanding feature of social movements, namely their *voluntary* character. To recall the quote from Korten's discussion in the introduction of this study[8], social movements expose a special quality. They constitute the domain of ordinary, committed people that are driven by ideas and shared visions of a better world, and not by budgets or organisational structures. They move on social energy able to mobilise independent action by countless individuals and organisations across national boundaries (1990: 124).

Paramount in the fourth generation orientation is that the "reinforcing synergy" generated in the sphere of the new social movements also has to be tapped by the field of development. As Korten defined the benign character of this sphere, it constitutes the "dynamic network of dedicated volunteers" that offer "mutual inspiration, political support, and exchange of experience and technology" (1990: 125). It constitutes a sphere of 'free space' through which actors of development may participate, find

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exploitative and competitive dimensions of male consciousness that have so long dominated the social and economic life of human societies" (1990: 5)

Finally, it is the same affirmation of the integrated meaning of people-centred development and the value-centred and issue-specific discourses generated by the new social movements that we also encounter in the latter parts of Korten's discussion. So we may, for example, notice how Korten, at a particular point, confirmed the centrality of the "most critical [development] issues to be addressed in the 1990s" also "to the agendas of environmental, women's, peace, and human and civil rights groups" (1990: 200).

[8] See again p. 8.

numerous allies to their cause and achieve people-centred development on a global scale (ibid)[9].

5.3 Fundamental components

5.3.1 Central actors

5.3.1.1 Voluntary organisations

Korten's discussion of fourth generation development strategies would not mean the end of the NGO development debate, as the absence of reference to this institutional sector in the previous section (5.2) might suggest[10]. Yet, in the discussion of this mode of strategic development action, reference to the NGO sector would undergo greater refinement (in accordance with the voluntary principle spelled out in 5.2).

According to Korten the term 'non-governmental organisation' embraces such a wide variety of disparate organisations that it is impossible to identify a distinctive developmental role for an 'NGO'. Consequently, a framework is needed "that would have more meaning in defining the distinctive nature and development roles of the organizations commonly referred to as NGOs" (Korten 1995: 183). To define such a framework, the following basic classification of the institutional division in society needs to be made:

- *Government*: This sector "has the distinctive ability to demand resources through use of threat, power or coercion". In the idealised view of this sector, these special powers are exercised "to defend the law and to maintain social justice through the transfer of wealth from the rich to those in particular need" (ibid). In reality, however, this sector has shown itself to be most responsive to the perceived needs of the political and economic powerful, thus often acting as a vanguard for escalating injustice, exploitation and corruption (ibid; Korten 1990: 99).
- *Business*: This sector specialises in the use of economic power and obtains its resources through the sale or exchange of products and services. Its distinctive

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[9] Here Korten upheld the historical example of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) movement referred to in footnote 6. According to him this movement achieved "one of human history's most extraordinary public policy reversals, as family planning was moved from a forbidden topic to a *global* public policy priority" (1990: 125; italics added).

[10] See in contrast to this absence the frequent reference to this sector in the exposition of first, second and third generation strategies in 4.2.

role is to create new wealth through value-added activities, which should be regarded as an essential function in any society. Yet, because of its orientation to market forces, this sector tends to be most responsive to the wants of those who have money and as a result, gain control over the exchange processes (Korten 1995, ibid; 1990, ibid).

- *Voluntary sector*: This sector specialises in the use of "integrative power" or "power of consensus" and succeeds in mobilising human and financial resources on the basis of the shared value commitments of its participants (staff, citizen volunteers). This value orientation renders the actors or organisations in this sector their particular strength and makes them an important innovative *counter-force* to the political and economic power agendas of government and the business sectors (Korten 1995: 183, 185; 1990: 97-98). As spelled out by Korten:

> They serve as forums for the definition, testing and propagation of ideas and values in ways that are difficult or impossible for the other two sectors. Their commitment to integrative values, over political or economic values, gives them a natural orientation to the perceived needs of politically and economically disenfranchised elements of the population that are not met through the normal political processes of government or the economic processes of the market. (Korten 1990: 98)

On the basis of such a threefold distinction the nature of development-oriented NGOs may be closer defined. According to Korten not all NGOs belong to the voluntary sector. A more correct view is to allocate to each of the above sectors its *own* distinctive type of NGO (1995: 185). Here the following distinction can again be made:

- *GONGOs*: Known by the anomalous term '*governmental* nongovernmental organisations', this is a type of NGO that should rather be seen as a creation of government to serve as instruments of government policy (Korten 1995, ibid; 1990: 2, 104-105). They are the creations of more sophisticated governments that respond to official donors' desire to channel funding to NGOs (Korten 1995, ibid). In practice "(t)heir existence depends on state sponsorship and resources, their leaders are subject to government appointment or approval, and ultimately they are accountable to the state rather than to their members or an independent board" (Korten 1990: 104-105).

- *Public Service Contractors*: While they are nongovernmental and often nonprofit, this type of NGO is driven by market considerations more than the values of the voluntary sector spelled out above (Korten 1990: 102). Their function is that of "market-oriented nonprofit *businesses* serving public purposes" (Korten 1990: 2; italics added). Because they are highly adjusted to donor preferences and priorities, they are, on the basis of their greater technical and managerial specialisation, the NGO-type that is traditionally favoured by donors (Korten 1995: 185-186; 1990: 103).

- *Voluntary organisations*: This is the type of NGO that fits the profile of the *voluntary sector* set out above. They are organisations that "range from Mother Theresa-type charities to social activist organizations that are on the front lines of such causes as environmental protection, women's rights, human rights protection, peace, and land reform". They are organisations that "may or may not accept official donor funding, but when they do it is on their own terms and only to serve activities integral to their self-defined mission" (Korten 1995: 186).

It follows that all three the above sectors, and by implication NGO-types, ought to be regarded as indispensable to meaningful development. All three sectors and types are by nature 'third-party' organisations[11] that "have distinctive competencies essential to a dynamic self-sustaining development process". Excessive emphasis on any one to the exclusion of the others would, therefore, pose a serious threat to long-term, authentic development (Korten 1990: 98).

Yet, as suggested by the above profile of the voluntary sector, in the accomplishment of fourth generation development goals NGOs closer defined as *voluntary organisations* (VOs), take a special place. In contrast to the government and business sectors, which tend to define their strength in terms of the size and financial resources of their constituent organisations, the strength of VOs can be found in their *diversity* and capacity for *independent* action (delinked from the sectors of government and business). They are organisations that, based on their voluntary nature, can reach out and form alliances more easily than other organisations. Through this ability,

[11] According to Korten 'third party' organisations are those that base their social legitimacy on the assumption that they exist to serve the needs of third parties, i.e. persons who are not themselves members of the organisation (1990: 95-96).

combined with their value- and idea-centred focus, they are able "to achieve scale and leverage through joining in ever shifting coalitions - constantly defining, elaborating and redefining social issues, expanding political constituencies supporting their agendas of choice, promoting experimentation and advocating political action" (Korten 1990: 99).

In essence, VOs orientated towards fourth generation strategies *are service organisations to the people's or social movements* they support. This requires them to have managerial skills that go well beyond those normally associated with strategic management. Their job is to generate self-managing networks that will stimulate action beyond their own range of vision and control (Korten 1990: 127). Related to such escalating dynamics, they serve as important mechanisms of *democratisation* through which people define and voice their interests, meet local needs and make demands on government. But they also fulfill important educational roles through which "they provide training grounds for democratic citizenship, develop the political skills of their members, recruit new political leaders, stimulate political participation, and educate the broader public on a wide variety of public interest issues" (Korten 1990: 99)[12].

5.3.1.2 People's Organisations

According to Korten "(t)he people's sector is the *fourth* and most important of all the institutional sectors for people-centred development" (1995: 187; italics added). Where the first three sectors identified so far constitute 'third-party' organisations in which action and thought are initiated by actors from 'outside', POs, by contrast, represent the *most basic principle of social movement theory.* They are by nature *'first-party'* organisations that embody people's direct and radical participation in events. They are the potential and actual manifestation of fourth generation development. They "are membership organizations that exist to serve their members, have membership accountable leaders, and are largely self-reliant in their generation of resources" (ibid; se also Korten 1990: 100).

[12] Here Korten (ibid) also referred to the "watchdog role" of fourth generation VOs. Along with the press they serve as checks on "the relentless tendency of the state to centralize its power and to evade civic accountability and control".

According to Korten a unique characteristic of POs is the ability to combine all *three* types of power competence represented respectively by the sectors identified in 5.3.1.1: threat, economic and integrative. Mentioning various types of POs, such as self-reliant cooperatives, landless associations, irrigator associations, burial associations, credit clubs, labour unions, trade associations and political interest groups (Korten 1990: 100), for Korten a good example of a PO that embodies the mix of power competence spoken of here, is the *cooperative business association.* While the primary function of the cooperative is economic, it is much more than a business. In its governmental role, the members of the cooperative "establish rules that they mutually agree to observe on threat of fines, expulsion or other sanctions" (ibid). Yet, they are simultaneously "bound together by *shared values* that may lead them to direct their business to the cooperative even when they might find better prices elsewhere" (Korten 1990: 100-101; italics added). In this association the officers may "contribute substantial time to the organization without compensation. The cooperative itself may engage in community service activities purely for the community good, or it may assist the formation of other cooperatives as a *public service*, purely for the good of the cooperatives' cause." (Korten 1990: 101; see also 1995: 187; italics added)

POs, then, may be regarded as another special type of NGO (see Korten 1990: 2) that integrate aspects of the above-mentioned three types of NGOs in its organisational structure. However, in Korten's definition a certain tension is sustained between the concepts 'NGOs' and 'VOs' on the one hand, and POs on the other. In the ideal setting of fourth generation development, Korten pointed out the aspect of *organisational conversion* that defines the commitment of NGOs/VOs. According to this aspect the central commitment of fourth generation NGOs/VOs is not only to create new POs and convert the first two sectors of government and business into POs[13], but to let themselves (i.e. VOs) be transformed into POs (1990: 101)[14]. This

[13] For Korten the transformation of local governments into POs occurs when they are made truly elected representatives of the people, their revenue base are built on locally levied tax revenues and strong direct citizen participation in their affairs is developed. Similarly business corporations become POs when employees of a publicly owned corporation buy their shares and become owners through an employee ownership stock plan (1990: 101).

[14] According to Korten (ibid) such a conversion happens when the staff of a VO are brought within the governance structure of a PO. It may then reconstitute itself as a paid secretariat of the PO that provides specialised administrative and technical services to the PO, and, at the same time, is accountable to and financed by the members of the PO.

transition, in fact, spells out the necessary progression towards authentic people-centred development, i.e. to truly transfer power into the hands of people[15]:

> One might well ask why a people-centred development vision should favor POs over third-party organizations, since by definition the latter are supposed to be serving external constituencies. The answer is that irrespective of whom an organization is supposed to serve, there is a considerable tendency for the people who actually exercise control over an organization to put its resources to their own service first. Thus the more that people can be placed in control of the organizations that presumably exist to serve them, the greater the probability that those organizations will fulfill their true function. (ibid)

It can therefore be said that POs, more than any other organisation, constitute the building blocks of people-centred development, i.e. of a just, sustainable and inclusive society (Korten 1995: 187, 188). In terms of Korten's conclusive profile of them, they are the authentic instruments for redistributing power in society by strengthening the economic and political power of the previously marginalised, the training grounds for democratic citizenship and institutional building blocks for democratisation, the expressions of grassroots concerns that provide the collective bargaining power to enable landless people, small farmers and urban squatters to negotiate on more equal terms with the political and economic powerful (Korten 1990: 101-102).

5.3.1.3 Citizen volunteers

In Korten's scheme of fourth generation actors, the organisational level would not be emphasised at the cost of the individual or personal level. At the heart of fourth generation development action stands for him, the citizen volunteer, the *personification* of this mode of development.

For Korten, in line with the free idea flow of social movement dynamics that accomplishes connections and associations across boundaries of place, space and identity, the citizen volunteer comes *from all spheres of life*:

> They are those countless individuals who bring the spirit and action of committed citizenship to their communities and to the organizations in which they work - irrespective of the sector to which that organization belongs. (1990: 106)

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[15] For Korten this recognition holds serious implications for an intellectual enterprise that still predominantly focuses on the role of VOs/NGOs in development at the cost of POs. It in effect means "rather consistently building the power of voluntary organizations as the voices of the people - which they are not and cannot be - rather than building the capability of the people to speak with their own voice" (1995: 188).

Thus the citizen volunteer should not be perceived as belonging only to the group of persons that are directly involved with the two central organisations of fourth generation development identified above, namely VOs and POs. Whereas these organisations should be seen as providing the organisational support system for fourth generation development activity, the means for individual actors to obtain identity, legal recognition and aggregate resources for endeavours (Korten 1990: 108), the span of the citizen volunteer stretches far beyond their immediate activity. Korten observed that a (fourth generation) people-centred development agenda was "a *human* agenda that unites the interests of all people, *irrespective* of class, race, religion, nationality - or the institutional sector on which they depend for their daily bread". In this all-encompassing sense, "(i)t is an agenda that must unite businessmen, religious leaders, newscasters, labourers, teachers, farmers, the unemployed, homemakers, politicians, bureaucrats, technicians, volunteer workers and countless others" (1995: 189; italics added).

For Korten the achievement of fourth generation development and transformation hinges greatly on the commitment and ability of people to carry fourth generation values into the occupations in which they stand (see 1990: 107). In respective occupations "the volunteer spirit is actualized when the individual acts as a responsible values-driven human being in ways that go beyond, or even conflict with, defined bureaucratic roles". Characteristic of this behaviour is the fact that it is not motivated by any kind of reward[16], or sanctioned by the organisation that employ the person (1990: 106). It is the behaviour of full persons, citizens who are open to the conflicts, processes and values that shape society, who apply a certain critical consciousness in carrying out their organisational duties and not simply bureaucratic procedures (1990: 107). Ultimately, it is the behaviour of persons who, although filling occupations in the sectors of government and business, give the integrative values that are associated with the voluntary sector, precedence over the values of coercion and economic profit commonly associated with the first two (1990: 108).

According to Korten, different levels of citizenship can furthermore be identified: the

[16] In his exposition of the nature of the voluntary sector, Korten particularly pointed to the aspect of financial reward. He emphasised that the surest way to kill a movement, was "to smother it with money" (1990: 124; see p. 126).

community citizen, national citizen and global citizen. Yet, in achieving the transformation envisioned in fourth generation development the *global citizen* takes primary importance (ibid). This is the person that commands a critical consciousness that allows him/her to transcend the institutional and cultural conditioning of the first two levels of citizenship for the larger good of society. Relating to similar critical consciousness in other locations (globally speaking), it is the person that exposes "the ability to think independently, critically and constructively, to view problems within their long-term context, and to make judgments based on a commitment to longer-term societal interests that are distinct from, and, in fact may conflict with short-term interests" (1990: 107).

5.3.1.4 A global people's movement

In Korten's identification of the central actors in fourth generation development, individual citizen volunteers and the organisations working towards fourth generation development (NGOs, VOs, POs), find their collective identity in the notion of a *global people's movement.* For Korten, the realisation of such a movement poses the ultimate challenge in fourth generation development:

> The task is daunting. Since the forces that have captured the land and the sky are global in their scope, our vision must be global as well as local. Obviously this is beyond the capacity of any individual NGO. As individual people and organizations we must work to meld ourselves into a global force through the formation of coalitions and alliances that ultimately meld millions of people into a global movement for change. Those of us who have defined our roles in terms of projects and the internal management of individual organizations will need to expand our perspective and become adept at new modes of working.
>
> We must be willing to take risks, to reach out beyond the circle of like-minded organizations and individuals to build alliances with concerned citizens in business and government, to engage the mass-based social movements, religious groups and institutions, and the mass media. (1995: 188)

It follows that the objective of global change in the people-centred development agenda can only be achieved through the formation of *alliances across people's movements* (Korten 1990: 200). In this sense a global people's movement represents the ultimate driving force to carry forward the dynamics of a social movement approach to development that is spelled out in 5.2 of this chapter. It embodies the ultimate integrating and synthesising force through which the various organisations

and movements in the fourth generation development can present their overlapping interests as a people-centred development agenda *in the singular*.

Korten, in this regard, would refer to the *reactive* and *proactive* thrusts of the various social movements. In a contemporary social movement dynamics the reactive thrust seeks to block harmful actions, such as the "abuse of human rights, discrimination against women, regulation of dangerous products, increased arms expenditures and the cutting of forests". The proactive thrust, again, seeks "the creation of new and more positive social institutions: the strengthening of democratic institutions, introducing a stronger feminist perspective into public policy, promoting citizen diplomacy through sister city programs and developing markets for sustained yield forest products" (1990: 200). Irrespective of the movement in question, the various proactive thrusts could, according to Korten, be viewed as *all supporting elements of the transformation agenda consistent with the people-centred development vision*[17]. On the basis of this perception, it would therefore *be natural* for the respective movements to *build interlinking alliances with one another around common interests in proactive transformation* (1990: 200-201).

It can be concluded that on the strategic level, the impact and realisation of a global people's movement can be best visualised by the concept of *global citizen networking*. Korten commented that the power of civil society rested with its extraordinary capacity to "rapidly and flexibly network diverse and dispersed individuals and organizations that are motivated by voluntary commitments" (1995a: 297). Here the role of modern *communication technology* to bring members of civil society on an equal footing with the powerful global corporations of the world, can be emphasised. The same electronic communications technologies - phone, fax and computer - that have been used by corporations to extend their global reach, are holding the same potential for civil society actors aspiring the formation of a global people's movement[18]. The strategic implementation of these technologies would also allow

[17] Cf. here the first two paragraphs of 5.2 (p. 144).

[18] While placing the role of modern communication technology and a communication strategy at the centre of fourth generation development (see the quote on p. 145), this theme is, however, nowhere in the writings of Korten presented as a broader and more worked out theory of communication and development. On this basis the discussion of 'an alternative communication dynamics' in 6.4 can be taken as an important complementary framework to Korten's basic framework of a fourth generation development strategy.

these actors "to move quickly and flexibly in joint actions at local, national, and global levels" (ibid; see also Korten and Quizon 1995: 160).

5.3.2 Key elements

Korten observed that in fourth generation development the priority became "the transformation of our values, technology and institutions - in both North and South". Yet, this must not be seen "as a prelude to setting a new pattern for the restoration of growth consistent with justice, sustainability and inclusiveness". To the contrary, in fourth generation development *transformation*, and not growth, defines the essential *global* development priority and the only path to resolving the contemporary global crisis[19] (1990: 133).

Against this background Korten prioritised the following seven *key elements* (or *areas*) as central to a fourth generation global transformation agenda for the 1990s:

(i) Reconciliation and demilitarisation.

(ii) Lifestyles and technologies.

(iii) Spiritual development.

(iv) The family.

(v) Political democratisation.

(vi) Economic democratisation.

(vii) Trade and investment relations (1990: 163-179).

Stipulated as an agenda in which voluntary action has a critical role to play in mobilising citizen action in support of each area or element (1990: 162), it is possible to say that the various elements or areas identified by Korten, could clearly be taken as belonging to the realm of the idea- and value-centred domain emphasised in the fourth generation development orientation. Indeed, here we are presented with areas of transformation that are first and foremost defined *by the various new social movements* (peace, ecological, environmental, consumer, women's, human rights, democratic, economic), in which the participation of the latter three actors identified

[19] In this regard we may, again, recall Korten's identification of a contemporary "threefold crisis" of world *poverty*, *environmental destruction* and *communal violence/social disintegration* that was indicated in the previous chapter (see the second paragraph on p. 117 and footnote 29).

in the previous section becomes determinant, the role of an overlapping and explicit idea- and value-centred actor such as *religion*[20] can also be emphasised, and third-party actors such as VOs/NGOs (i.e. the first actors identified in the previous section) rather fulfill a supporting and catalysing role[21]. Here the participation/role of these actors can be highlighted in areas of transformation that are clearly *global* in scope, spell out the fundamental *foundations* for long-term, sustainable people-centred development and, for its positive outcome, hinge on large-scale idea, value and relational changes in society:

**Reconciliation and demilitarisation*: It can be said that this element captures the fundamental basis of people-centred development. According to Korten, there are "no greater contributor to human suffering and no more significant barrier to effective development action than the violent conflicts that are tearing apart communities and societies throughout the world" (1990: 163). For the forces of reconciliation and forgiveness to excel, this particularly calls for a movement towards *global* demilitarisation. This means "the reallocation of military resources to alleviate poverty and to convert the global economy to sustainable modes of production". It means that military assistance has to be limited to helping Southern countries to establish small and disciplined military forces that are committed to the principles of democratic civilian rule (1990: 164).

**Lifestyles and technologies*: As radically directed to the human will and consciousness as the first area, this area calls for a strategic impact that would appeal to the overconsumers of the world and lead them towards ecologically more sustainable lifestyles[22] (see 1990: 164-167). This must lead humanity, and in particular the rich, to redefine "the good life, with less emphasis on the material and greater emphasis on the social, intellectual and spiritual quality of life" (1990: 165). It

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[20] An actor that by nature overlaps with all four categories of actors identified in the previous section, the reference to religion can here be made on the basis of Korten's explicit identification of religion as an important fourth generation actor in the third key area that he identifies (see the discussion further below).

[21] See with regard to such supporting and catalysing role also the discussion in 5.4.

[22] Korten (1990: 165) would put this statement in context by applying statistics of the International Institute for Environment and Development and World Resources Institute. Based on the years 1984-1985, "four countries - the United States, Soviet Union, Japan and West Germany - with 14 per cent of the world's population accounted for 53 percent of the world's consumption of commercial energy and a comparable share of important metals". Directed at the rest of the world's population, this meant that total world energy production and resource extraction had to increase more than *250 percent* if they were to equal the per capita consumption standards of the above-mentioned four countries.

must lead humanity to revisit current compositions of economic growth (1990: 164-165), direct its energy to the devise of and application of environmentally sound technologies (as the basis for future improvements in the well-being of particularly the underconsumers of the world) (1990: 165-166) and, finally, bring under control as rapidly as possible the continued explosive growth of the world's population (1990: 166).

**Spiritual development*: Particularly relevant to our thesis in this study of the strategic role of the churches in development, this element constitutes, according to Korten, one of the most basic dimensions of fourth generation development and relates to questions of "*the uses of power, values, love, brotherhood, peace and the ability of people to live in harmony with one another*" (1990: 168; italics added). Moreover, in relation to these aspects an actor or actors such as *religion* and the *churches*[23] (at their best) can truly excel and become central to the achievement of fourth generation development. On the basis of a theoretical concept of change that holds structural change to be dependent on the emergence of an alternative human consciousness[24], here religion and the churches can truly make a contribution on the *structural* level:

> Unjust structures are the creation of people and are products of the greed and egotism that are deeply imbedded in human nature. The human spirit must be strengthened to the point that greed and egotism play a less dominant role. This is perhaps the most central of religious missions, and a far worthier challenge for religiously oriented voluntary development organizations than the distribution of charity to the victims of the failure of spiritual teaching. (ibid)

For Korten, however, in contrast to narrower, conservative views of the spiritual, such a 'spiritual' engagement takes on a distinct ethico-political dimension. It makes the aspect of *power*[25] the heart of its concern and particularly sees its role to be the *conscientising* of the power holders of the world with regard to their "stewardship responsibility" (ibid). From a different angle, it leads 'enlightened' religion to

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[23] It is significant to note that Korten referred here not only to the more general denominator of religion, but that he specifically also highlighted the role of the churches as a specific institution of religion.

[24] Significant here, is Korten's reliance on the perspective of Charles Elliot (see 1990: 168) on 'conscientisation' that was discussed in 3.3.2 of this study and that confirms a direct line between the perspective highlighted in that particular point of the discussion and our discussion in the present chapter of fourth generation development (see in particular again pp. 93-94; cf. also footnote 14 in the introduction of this study).

[25] In continuation of the observation in the previous footnote, Korten's emphasis here on the notion of 'power' constitutes a further direct reliance on the perspective of Charles Elliot. See again in this regard pp. 92-94.

challenge the "dominance of traditional masculine consciousness" that is institutionalised by growth-centred development and impresses the ideals of competition, empire and conquest. As positive counterpoint, it seeks to instill into the human consciousness more *feminine* values "of a nurturing family and community, place, continuity, conserving, reconciliation[26], caring and reverence for nature and the continuous regeneration of life"[27] (1990: 169).

**The family*: For Korten this element constitutes "*the most basic unit* of human society... essential to the construction and maintenance of strong integrative social structures" and the individual's most important source "of economic and psychological security" (1990: 169-170; italics added). This insight requires a new approach in tending to the deprivations and exploitation of *women* and *children*. Contrary to the traditional separation of these groups from the family in social development programmes[28], the social agenda has to be the restoring and strengthening of the family "in ways that increase equality, love, mutual respect and responsibility"[29] (ibid).

**Political democratisation*. According to a statistic presented by Korten, more than 50 present of the South still lived under non-elected governments at the beginning of the 1990s. This situation has suppressed the creative social energy of civil society, the matrix of people-centred development (see 1990: 171). As this ongoing suppression ought to make the issue of human rights and democracy central to the global prospects of people-centred development, new guiding principles in the area of international development assistance to promote human rights and democracy are called for. Firstly, assistance is to be provided to non-elected governments only in instances where it clearly and directly contributes to democratisation. Secondly, non-governmental organisations are to be made the primary channels of other aid intended

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[26] Cf. footnote 21 (this chapter).

[27] What is referred to here by Korten as 'feminine values', will be further worked out in 7.4.4 of this study under the heading of 'soft culture'.

[28] For Korten (1990: 170-171) this kind of separation is, for example, well illustrated in programmes for street children. It means treating the symptom of the problem, rather than its cause.

[29] Such a positive pronouncement does not mean that Korten merely romanticises the family. It is recognised by him that the family belongs to the list of contemporary human institutions that should be the subject of transformation, as it often serves as a mechanism of suppression and subordination, particularly for women and children. However, this does not neglect the fact that the family remains one of the most basic units of society and, potentially and actually, a primary source to nurture the values mentioned by Korten (see 1990: 169-171).

to benefit people that live under authoritarian governments (1990: 172). To enforce such measures, this arrangement anticipates the preparation of a universal bill of rights for voluntary and people's organisation. To be based on existing international legal documents, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, such a bill would "set forth universal standards by which governmental compliance might be assessed by monitoring bodies" (1990: 172-173).

**Economic democratisation*: For Korten this is an element that "goes hand in hand with political democratization as the foundation of an equity-led sustainable growth strategy" (1990: 173). As much a *political* as an economic strategy and fitting into the realm of political economy, many measures of a political nature could be identified that support democratisation: land reform, aquarian reform, the formation of member-owned and controlled cooperatives, the implementation of stock ownership plans that give employees a strong voice in management and a share in profits, policies that favour a strong small business sector, and guarantees of the right to unionise (ibid). An element thus emphasising the *participation* of particular groups and organisations in society (in accordance with our earlier observation) and the achievement of policy change, economic democratisation is, furthermore, an area to be challenged especially on the *ideological* level. It calls for a critical reconsideration of the commitment of the two grand economic ideologies, capitalism and socialism, to the ideal of broad economic participation and ownership by people:

> Socialism and capitalism, in practice, have both failed seriously in this regard. Socialism has concentrated productive asset in the hands of those who control state power, though these people are neither owners nor workers in any meaningful sense. In a parallel fashion, capitalism has concentrated control in the hands of financial managers, and particularly investment bankers, who leverage large sums of other people's money to gain control over corporate assets for their personal benefit. As in the practice of socialism, these people are neither owners of the capital they control nor are they workers who depend on this capital to produce useful outputs. (1990: 173-174).

However, in his call for innovation, that clearly begins at the idea level, Korten would not propose a new grand economic ideology. While global in scope, Korten's framework for innovation would rather correspond to the people-centred development theoretical framework spelled out under the discussion of the third generation

development strategy in the previous chapter[30]. By way of a final observation, Korten commented that the question of *who* should control the productive assets, remained "central to current policy debates, but *not* as the question has been defined by traditional socialists and capitalists" (italics added). The challenge here is "to achieve true economic democracy based on meaningful participation in the ownership and control of productive assets for reasons of equity, productivity and environmental responsibility" (1990: 174).

**Trade and investment relations*: As in the case of the previous identified area of economic democratisation, it can be said that this element closely overlaps with the theoretical framework and principles spelled out under the third generation development understanding. To recall a central concept in this understanding, current international trade and investment relations could be seen as the major force sustaining the principle of functionalism[31]. As commented by Korten, contemporary development wisdom focuses the attention on foreign financial resources. However, to meet the repayments of loans and foreign investments of international development assistance, requires from a country to in turn generate foreign exchange through exports. This means "*diverting resources away from meeting the needs of its own citizens* to meet the needs of foreign consumers" (italics added). It means serving "the interests of the international bankers and corporations who advocate such policies" (1990: 174-175).

Existing trade and investment practices could also be regarded as unjust and unsustainable in the light of the reigning terms of trade by which "the export earnings of Southern countries are heavily dependent on exporting environmental resources... [and] are then used to pay for imports from Northern countries that derive their value from non-depleting information inputs" (1990: 176). Korten spelled out the bottom line of this arrangement, saying that to speak of the 'development' of a nonrenewable resource poses a contradiction in terms. A non-renewable resource can be exploited, or expropriated. But it cannot be 'developed'. "Development must, at least by a people-centred definition, be sustainable." (1990: 177).

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[30] See again 4.3.1.

[31] See again pp. 116-118.

Recalling a second central concept in the third generation development understanding, transformation in the area of international trade and investment relations could be best conceptualised by the principle of territoriality[32] (i.e. the counterpoint of functionalism). Determined by the core people-centred development values of justice, sustainability and inclusiveness[33], the underlying vision here is the featuring of local communities as diversified local economies that is relatively self-reliant in meeting basic needs, controlling their productive resources and technologies, and absorbing their own wastes. The intent, here, however, is not to terminate international trade and investment[34], "but rather to moderate and restructure it in ways that reverse the tendencies toward absentee ownership, concentration of economic control and the export of environmental costs" (1990: 179).

5.4 Third and fourth generation action: an overlapping and complementary unit

We have reached a point in the discussion where fourth generation development can be identified as a value- and idea-centred approach to development and transformation that clearly goes beyond the third generation development strategic orientation that was discussed in the previous chapter. By prioritising particular normative actors and key elements of transformation, it can be said that development is now equated with a higher level of conscientisation and ethico-political discourse which cannot be pinned down by the more formal policy-making, organisational and learning processes in third generation development action. By contrast, development ultimately coincides here with the 'value', 'idea' and 'democratic politics' of the new social movements, a dynamics that penetrates and links up beyond set places and spaces. As such, more radical than in the third generation orientation, development actors in the fourth generation orientation share the radical democratic and participatory principles of social movement theory. Varying from third-party NGOs/VOs (as in third generation development) to first-party POs, citizen volunteers and actual movement formations whose identity is all shaped by and who are themselves expressions (collectively and separately) of the new social movement dynamics, it can be said that their participation and ownership of the development process (i.e. particularly the latter

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[32] See again pp. 116-119.

[33] See again p. 115 where these three principles are highlighted as determinant to people-centred development.

[34] See also again the identification of 'export promotion' as a final, sixth stage in the equity-led sustainable growth strategic framework set out on p. 120.

three categories of actors) state the *condition* for the actual *realisation* of development.

However, such an identification of fourth generation development again calls for a requalification. As the numerous cross-references to chapter four of this study in footnotes in the previous section (5.3) of this chapter suggest, fourth generation development in many instances overlaps with and refers back to meanings in the third generation orientation. It fully adopts the principles of people-centred development that determine third generation development action and shares the latter's value orientation and vision of transformed societies. Stated differently, it does not underevaluate the policy and organisational processes that define the decentralised and local level, and *is itself biased towards the local*[35].

Viewed from the third generation perspective set out in the previous chapter[36], we may also observe how this orientation treads on the domain of fourth generation development. While not to the same radical extent as we have stipulated in the first paragraph of this section, it may nevertheless be observed how the fourth sector of people's organisations are already prioritised as primary actors in development vis-à-vis secondary actors such as NGOs and government. In this regard, we may point to the perspective, albeit by a minority of authors, that criticises the lack of concentration on the fourth sector in the third generation orientation[37]. We may observe how, on the strategic level, the third generation orientation already extends to a perspective on movement building and how concepts such as networking and coalition-building (especially between civil society actors) enter the framework. In close adherence to such concepts, we may observe how the third generation perspective, while in a less elaborate manner, also begins to adopt a global or transnational strategic orientation.

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[35] We may, for instance, note how this becomes the ultimate reference point for Korten in his book, *When Corporations Rule the World.* Under a final heading in this book, "Localizing the Global System", Korten stated the purpose of *global* action as to create a multilevel system of institutions through which unnecessary interdependence can be reduced and the remaining interdependence can be managed in ways that maintain a persistent *bias* in favour of the following processes:

- The empowerment of the local to control and manage local resources to local benefits.
- The elimination of production or consumption costs beyond the borders of given localities.
- The encouragement of cooperation among localities in the search for solutions to shared problems (1995a: 320).

[36] See here in particular the final two perspectives set out in 4.3.2, starting at the top of p. 126.

[37] See again the quote on p. 126.

The need for the mobilisation of what is recognised as the vital actors of people-centred development (NGOs, social movements and POs) beyond confined local and national borders and the formal policy processes seems to be recognised, if not already adopted as a crucial strategy.

In view of the foregoing observations we may turn our attention to the final chapter in *Getting to the 21st Century*. Following on the chapter in which he set out the seven key elements in 5.3.2 (i.e. a clear fourth generation agenda), we may notice how Korten, in this last chapter, came to highlight and discuss the following four *critical roles* for voluntary action:

(i) Catalysing the transformation of institutions, policies and values.

(ii) Monitoring and protesting abuses of power.

(iii) Facilitating reconciliation.

(iv) Providing essential community services (1990: 185).

We can assume, in the larger context of Korten's discussion, that these four critical roles spell out (for Korten) the fundamental modes of action by the various central actors identified in 5.3.1 to achieve the transformation of the key elements described in 5.3.2. Yet, and this is the main purpose of the discussion in the remaining part of this section, we may, in addition to a recognition of the contents of these roles, apply Korten's discussion of them to illustrate our argument of the overlapping and complementary relationship between the third and fourth generation modes of action.

Fourth generation development, Korten's discussion of the first critical role of *catalysing systems change* comes to suggest, requires the specialised catalytic and advocacy skills of professional VOs. A mode of action in which the emphasis falls on "*pro-action* to create positive change more than *re-action* to police negative behaviour" (1990: 186; italics retained), it closely overlaps with the organisational and policy skills emphasised in the third generation development strategic orientation in the previous chapter of this study[38]. It calls for specialised third-party voluntary

[38] See again the whole of 4.3.3, as well as footnote 44 in chapter four for the references to this aspect elsewhere in the chapter.

agents to help people to "define, internalize and actualize a people-centred development vision" (1990: 186). In sum, it calls for specialised and skilled third-party voluntary agents, to activate, stimulate, inform and change the consciousness of the first-party agents identified in fourth generation development, whose advancement and orientation towards the fourth generation development vision cannot be assumed out of hand.

It thus follows that fourth generation development in the above pro-active sense, does not imply bypassing the skills emphasised in the third generation development orientation, but builds on it. Korten stressed that the VO seeking to catalyse systems change, needed "a change theory that provides a basis for focusing its interventions". It needs "*skills in social and policy analysis, political strategy, and public education, and it must be able to define and articulate policy issues clearly to lay audiences*" (1990: 192; italics added). As on the level of third generation development involvement, it calls on VOs/NGOs to develop *new competencies*. It requires them to scale-up to a level of policy education and advocacy that goes beyond a mere lobbying to protect or increase levels of foreign development assistance (1990: 193).

However, and this brings us back to the difference between the two orientations, here, more than in the third generation development action, policy education and advocacy take on a *global* orientation. It becomes a question of involvement in what Korten calls "the larger policy issues" that have traditionally been left (by the Voluntary/NGO sector) to global role players such as the World Bank, IMF and bilateral donors (1990: 193). It becomes a question of *education for global citizenship*[39] whereby people of both North and South are brought to an understanding of the actions required to eliminate the causes of human suffering, particularly in the South, and whereby they are prepared "for active participation in a global transformation" (1990: 187). In this latter sense, fourth generation strategic development orientation, to a far greater extent, makes an appeal on the conscience and value orientation of people. It follows that policy and institutional change are not so much achieved as a result of the interventions of professional agents that act in isolation from ordinary people, but by a mass of critical, conscientised people. Here, more than ever, the focus falls on the

[39] See in addition, here, again the definition of the 'global citizen' in the last paragraph of 5.3.1.3 on p. 154.

free space of what Korten calls *people-to-people linkages* that through processes of (global) networking and alliance-building lead to mobilised vision, action and ultimate change. The concept at stake here is put in a nutshell in the following quote, which states the role of the third-party VO/NGO as catalyst and not the achiever of change:

> The challenge is to reach out through human networks, study groups and forums where people can engage and dialogue on critical development issues. There is a need to seek more opportunities for true people-to-people linkages, bringing together community level environmental activists, cooperative leaders, women's rights activists and organizers of farm laborers from North and South for mutual exchange to build a shared vision and put their efforts in global perspective. It is appropriate that VOs of both North and South give more attention to strengthening and engaging their natural citizen constituencies in ways appropriate to their nature. These would all be positive steps toward transforming private international assistance into a people's international development cooperation movement.
>
> In the effort to develop engaged constituencies, lessons might be found in the experience of the international issues network campaigns that have been organized over the past few years, the best known of which was the campaign against the promotion of infant formula as a substitute for breast milk. There have been others in seeds, pesticides and pharmaceutical drugs that have brought together global education and citizen action in the fullest sense. (1990: 204)

We may observe that it is also appropriate to understand Korten's second critical role of *monitoring and protesting abuses of power* as not lying outside the domain of third generation development action. Korten pointed out that the latter role was an essential dimension of the transformation agenda (1990: 187). By implication, it constitutes an essential complementary action to the first role of catalysing policy, institutional and value change, which is a defining aspect of the third generation orientation as we have indicated. Thus, it is a role that can be well perceived within the wider networking, coalition-building and relational dynamics of the third generation orientation pointed out earlier in this section. While it is less to be understood as a people-to-people interaction, and more a people/NGO-to-government interaction (cf. 1990: 146-147), in the third generation mode of involvement information vital to the role of monitoring and protest (as pointed out by Korten) can be gathered (see 1990: 195). Moreover, and given the focus of its interaction, in the third generation mode capabilities and experience not so readily available in fourth generation orientations - such as hard

core dealings and confrontations with government and the state - can be tapped to fulfill the role of monitoring and protest[40].

We may view Korten's fourth critical role of *implementing large-scale service programmes* to similarly overlap with third generation development action. Defined by Korten as a kind of service very much different from the temporary nature of short-term delivery of relief services (first generation) and the implementation of conventional development projects (second generation) (1990: 196), it can be pointed out how: (i) Similar to what is stipulated as the basic character of third generation strategic action in the previous chapter[41], Korten highlighted the *systemic*, *sustainable* and *widespread* nature of this critical role. (ii) Korten's description of this role spells out a level of involvement that has much to gain from and overlaps with the third generation social learning experiences in organisational and institutional change set out in the previous chapter. It is a mode of involvement that concentrates on such aspects as sustained self-financing, effective resource management, local ownership and control of resources, and the development of new types of technical, strategic and social skills[42].

As the following profile suggests such an overlapping, for Korten the deliverance of large-scale service programmes constitutes an indispensable part of a *sustainable equity-led growth strategy* of development (the aspect of immediate material, social and economic needs is thus not neglected in fourth generation development and is integrated with the larger issues of institutional and value transformation). He stressed that it was a service mode able to function on a *national scale*[43]. It goes

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[40] As argued by Korten, the second role of monitoring and protest does not to a lesser extent assume the need for VOs/NGOs to develop new competencies. In this role, as in the case of the first, it is equally essential that the organisation has "the capacity to use the gathered information in ways that lead to specific political, judicial or administrative action". It requires "*capabilities in political lobbying, litigation and mobilization of public protests through the media, demonstrations and letter-writing campaigns*" (1990: 195; italics added).

[41] For a basic description see again 4.2.3.

[42] See again 4.3.3.

[43] For Korten (1990: 191) significant examples of large-scale programme implementation by NGOs, which on a sustainable basis, has managed to spread their services across wide areas and to large groups of the population, even on a national scale, are: CARE in Bangladesh, that through its food for work programme, supports the construction of nearly 10 000 miles of road a year; Bangladesh Rural Advance Committee (BRAC) that has given training to approximately 90 percent of the households in the country in oral rehydration; the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh that has established itself as a permanent banking institution and extends credit to some 589 734 members, mostly women; the Sarvodaya Shrama Movement in Sri Lanka, whose programmes reach over 5000 villages in Sri Lanka; PROFAMILIA in Columbia, whose comprehensive national-scale programmes of family planning service delivery includes supplies and services rendered to nearly every family in the country.

beyond what government can and cannot achieve and brings *new and more innovative approaches* to such vital areas as family planning services, reforestation, basic education, small-scale credit and farmer's union and cooperative organisation. While best carried out on a decentralised basis (as also upheld in third generation action), "more *focused* and *coordinated* action than characterizes the episodic, scattered and ad hoc service delivery activities of many NGOs" is required (1990: 191; italics added). Ultimately, in this service mode the NGO positions itself for a *long-term* implementing role and seeks to *institutionalise* itself and its functions. This kind of strategic involvement, again, fundamentally assumes the question of *sustained financing* and how the permanent service-delivery NGO should organise its own governance structures in order to be held accountable for performance by the *people* who depend on its services[44] (1990: 196).

Thus, we have recognised that Korten identified four critical roles for voluntary action in a fourth generation development context. In our closer reflection of three of the four roles so far, we indicated that no clear distinction can be made between the fourth and third generation modes. In fact, our discussion should have made it clear that *in many instances the distinction between third and fourth generation action becomes blurred, that the two modes are overlapping and complementary units, that fourth generation development action rather builds on the perspectives, competencies, arrangements and processes in the third generation.*

However, the above statement should not again be seen as a contradiction of the initial statement in the first paragraph of this section about the distinctive nature of fourth generation development activity and its progression to a *higher* level of conscientisation and reorientation of human will and behaviour. This would be the meaning especially of Korten's third critical role of *facilitating reconciliation.* A mode of action is conceptualised here that *lies outrightly on the idea and value level of the fourth generation orientation.* It represents a perspective on transformation and an interaction mode that cannot be captured by the third generation meaning. Although it constitutes only *one* conceptualisation of a value- and idea-specific role

[44] One can assume that this will, as aspired to in both the third and fourth development orientations, imply an increasing movement towards the organisational conversion of NGOs/VOs into POs, whereby the people that are served, truly become the primary actors of the development process. See again the third paragraph on p. 126 and especially the discussion from the second paragraph of 5.3.1.2 until the quote on p. 152.

that falls outrightly in the fourth generation mould (in our assessment the seven key elements of transformation prioritised by Korten should make it possible to formulate further roles of this kind), it should be viewed as a role that is indispensable to the achievement of people-centred development. By implication, it is a role that becomes *conditional* to the successful execution of third generation action.

As suggested by Korten's discussion, such an outright fourth generation role brings into consideration *other actors* of development - actors who are rather marginalised and neglected in third generation development. In this regard, and in close relation to Korten's third key element of spiritual development set out in the last subsection[45], Korten would once again come to highlight the role of *religion*. As the following quote makes out a statement for religion to be *the* indispensable actor in achieving the goal of reconciliation:

> The need for reconciliation is one of the most fundamental development needs in our contemporary world. Religion, which commonly presumes to be society's arbiter of the values that govern human behaviour and relationships, must surely play a central role. While religion is all too often invoked as the rallying cry of the intolerant and hateful in the cause of violence, the basic message of all of the world's great religious teachers has been one of love, brotherhood and tolerance. Those who follow in the tradition of these great teachers are among the most important development workers of our day because they are attacking a root cause of human suffering. (1990: 189)

We may note, significantly, how Korten would in his further discussion, give a still sharper edge to his perspective on religion by juxtaposing such a reconciliatory role with a religious institution such as the church's traditional inclination to seek its development involvement in relief and project work. Recalling, as such, the charity-development juxtaposition that frames this study, as well as the mutual affiliation that has been drawn in chapter four between the churches and the NGO sector, which presents particularly for the churches the possibility of innovation in the realm of development, Korten stated:

> The reconciliation agenda presents a particular challenge to religiously affiliated VOs. These organizations have often developed agendas that are indistinguishable from those of their secular counterparts, even while attempting to work through local churches as the instruments of implementation. *Seldom have they asked whether*

[45] See again pp. 158-159.

local churches are the most appropriate organizations to implement well digging, food storage and road building projects. Nor have they asked what might be a distinctive role of the church in addressing the realities of underdevelopment.

If the church as an institution is not being effective in this role, then a priority concern of religiously oriented development VOs should be to help it rediscover its mission. If the institutional church is incapable of this role, *then the religiously oriented development VOs should themselves accept a responsibility to play the role of teacher in carrying forward the universal messages of love, brotherhood and reconciliation as central to their own missions.* (1990: 190-191; italics added)

CHAPTER SIX

A BROADER ALTERNATIVE ARTICULATION[1]

6.1 Introduction

We will focus in this chapter on what has been set out in the introduction of the previous chapter (5.1) as our aim to also go beyond the work of Korten and the NGO development debate (which Korten's work by and large represent) and to relate the concept of fourth generation strategic development action to a broader corpus of thinking that may complement, enrich and add to this concept. The focus here will be on debates of development and transformation that highlight or prioritise central aspects in Korten's debate, such as the new social movements, ethics and values, communication and, significantly, religion. As point of departure the debates on these themes in the interrelated circle of the World Order Models Project (WOMP) and the journal *Alternatives*[2] will be taken. While they certainly do not exhaust the historical debate on 'alternatives' and 'alternative development'[3], in the debates of this circle an interpretation can be found that, similarly to Korten, *assimilates the concept of development, more specifically the concept of alternative development*[4]*, into wider (alternative) discourses on social movements, values and ethics and a global transformative politics*. The following appreciation of this intellectual circle in an

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[1] This chapter draws selectively on perspectives that have been set out by the present writer in the article: "Toward a Normative Politics of Global Transformation: Synthesizing Alternative Perspectives", in *Transnational Associations* 1/97: 2-20.

[2] It can be said that the aim and scope of WOMP and *Alternatives* basically overlap (which is the conceptual advancement of a just (alternative) world order) and that the latter journal serves as a primary vehicle to promote the views of WOMP.

[3] A demarcation of 'alternative development' discourse by Jan Nederveen Pieterse, for instance, views it to travel under many aliases: 'appropriate development', 'participatory development', 'people-centred development', 'human scale development', 'people's self-development', 'autonomous development' and 'holistic development'; as well as under specific headings such as participation, participatory action research, grassroots movements, NGOs, empowerment, conscientisation, liberation theology, democratization, citizenship, human rights, development ethics, ecofeminism and cultural diversity (1998: 351-352). For historical overviews of the origins of 'alternative development' approaches, which also give an indication of this intellectual tradition in development thinking's relatedness to a wider range of sources, see furthermore Friedmann (1995: 1-13) and Hettne (1995: 160-206).

[4] We have, at the beginning of the previous chapter, indicated Korten's identification with what he calls an "alternative development paradigm" (see specifically the quote at the start of the chapter) and his claim, moreover, that his theoretical framework of a fourth generation development approach, which can otherwise be called a 'social movement approach' to development (see again 5.2), articulates this 'paradigm'.

earlier *Alternatives* article by the political scientist, Bob Stauffer, which, significantly, is entitled "After Socialism: Capitalism, Development, and the Search for Critical Alternatives", puts our choice in perspective:

> There have been... some new alternatives advanced in the 1980s that fall outside either of the old polarities, do not represent the middle approach just discussed, and do in fact see themselves as filling the space seemingly vacated by the left. Emblematic of this new approach is the perspective articulated by the network around the journal *Alternatives*. The journal itself publishes a variety of points of view, and is committed to advancing a just world order. No other group (with the exception, possibly, of the International Foundation for Development Alternatives) standing in opposition to the mainstream model has such a global network of contributors and participants in alternative development activities. Within its wide network, which includes the United Nations University system, it has sought to contribute "to the development of an ideology and the praxis that local grass-roots activists and social movements might find useful in their struggle for social transformation, humane governance, and a just peace," by linking those involved at that level with "groups working on global problems in a variety of settings throughout the world." (1990: 420)

It should be emphasised here that what is extracted from *Alternatives* publications below - which at its core constitutes the perspectives of writers intimately associated with the WOMP itself[5] - can at most be viewed as *selective aspects* of the debates by this intellectual circle. Taking these aspects as the starting-point of our exploration, the discussion will go on to draw on ever widening circles of debates that, while assuming close affinities with the actors and basic transformation agenda highlighted in the former circle and, in fact, including at its core writers from this circle, bring to the alternative and fourth generation framework further broadening perspectives, but also problematisations of central assumptions. Pointing here to the problematisation of social movement approaches in particular, but ultimately also civil society approaches to (global) development and transformation, the discussion will, finally, draw on new communication perspectives to (global) transformation. It will be proposed that these new communication perspectives should redefine the latter approaches and for that matter, constitute the ultimate defining notion in the fourth

[5] See again footnote 2. See furthermore the essays and fragments of essays that make up the second issue of *Alternatives* 19 (1994). Written for a special WOMP workshop held in Kadoma, Zimbabwe from January 28 - February 1, 1993, these essays give an indication of such a core group of writers and the interrelationship between *Alternatives* and WOMP.

generation and alternative strategic orientation (i.e. in making a communication perspective central to its strategic orientation, which, as we have indicated in the previous chapter, is the case in Korten's strategic orientation of fourth generation development, but which, at the same time, is also not presented as a fully worked out theory of transformation[6]).

6.2. Aspects of the World Order Models Project/*Alternatives* debates

6.2.1 Development: assimilated into a wider political and value dynamics

The outstanding characteristic of WOMP/*Alternatives* debates on development is the assimilation of this concept into wider political and value discourses. It follows that we may, from this basic definition, extract *two* meanings of development that seem to stand at the centre of these debates.

Similar to the emphasis in Korten's fourth generation development perspective on the fourth sector, on ordinary people and POs as the primary actors of development, development discourse, in the *first* meaning, appears to be *assimilated into wider political discourses of radical democratisation*. This becomes clear in an article by D. L. Sheth, "Alternative Development as Political Practice", which can be regarded as foundational to the concept of alternative development in the WOMP/*Alternatives* circle. Suggesting with the title that development takes on a distinct *political* meaning, we may note how Sheth in this article distinguished between two approaches to alternative development: the alternative 'structuralist' approach and the alternative 'normativist' approach (see 1987: 156-162).

For Sheth, however, both these alternative approaches fall short of a political theory and praxis by which non-state social and cultural movements/groups, or as Sheth also calls them, the victimised population and their own organisations (1987: 158), become the centres of transformative action. It follows that both alternative approaches *have failed to disengage themselves from the mainstream model of development*. Whereas the alternative structuralist approach can be appreciated for pointing out the structural injustice of the post-war model of development, it remains focused on the *state* as the primary agent to achieve systemic reform and transformation. Consequently, in its

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[6] See again footnote 18 (chapter five), as well as the quote on p. 145 and the final paragraph of 5.3.1.4 (pp. 155-156).

analytic and political framework the "ruling élite of the Third World countries remain, for good or bad, the only relevant actors for any strategy of action" (1987: 158).

In a similar way, the alternative normativist approach can be appreciated for bringing normative issues into the framework such as basic human needs, alternative life-styles, self-reliance and ecological appropriateness (1987: 160). Once again it remains an elitist endeavour "confined to the narrow circles of the counter-élites in the North and their jet-setting counterparts in the developing countries" (ibid). Having, as in the case of the first approach, also no political scope beyond changes that are to be made in state policies (1987: 162), it ultimately constitutes an approach devoid of a theory of political action that can make its alternative values "a basis of new consensus in the various national societies of the North and the South and at the micro-level of the local communities" (1987: 160).

It follows that, not unlike conventional development thinking (which is informed by positivistic social science), these alternative approaches present itself as *global* models of alternative development that assume *universality* for the alternative value system. Like conventional development thinking, they "posit *another* centralizing universal principal" (italics retained) that "ignore the vital points of *difference* in the existential conditions of different societies" (162; italics added). As further argued by Sheth:

> (I)nstead of viewing alternative development as a process through which a plurality of competing models can emerge and coexist, current thinking on the subject views it in terms of the emergence of one universal model of alternative development which would replace the conventional one.
>
> The implied shift turns out to be from one kind of linear universalising principle (embodied by modernity) to another such principle embodied in a vision of the 'post-industrial' or 'post-modern' society. The quest for universality ignores the fact that the historical, cultural and civilizational continuities that characterize different societies throw up different *universal* models around which their respective development may be shaped; and that it is through the interactions based on these empirical experiences of development that a new perspective on alternative development has to emerge... Yet, without reference to the empirical facts and processes that have a role in shaping norms, the whole exercise only reinforces the traditional norm-setting activity of the élites - however benevolent and radical they may be... The fact of the matter is, *the consumers of development cannot be kept out of the process of formulation of norms of alternative development* - however

> convenient this might prove for the theorists' own critical reason. (1987: 162-163; italics added)

The above concept of plurality, which is fundamentally focused on the grassroots and rejects any claim to universality, can be taken as the basis for Sheth and other writers from the WOMP/*Alternatives* circle's understanding of the meaning of alternative development. Going, for the moment, beyond Sheth's formulation, to the understandings of other writers in this circle, it becomes more appropriate to speak of the notion of alternative development as a misnomer itself[7]. Instead of using any language of 'development', Gustavo Esteva, for instance, claimed that it was preferable to speak of a *regeneration of people's space*, whereby they "carry out *their* projects, which are nothing else than to lead their own lives" (1987: 147; italics added). Instead of continuing theorising about development as a Third World problem, Bob Stauffer ended his article on the search for critical alternatives by stating that it would be much more viable to shift to a global theorising "that attacks the basic premises upon which modernisation rests, and raises a series of objections to capitalist development on the basis of justice, treatment of women, minorities, indigenous people, etc." (1990: 125-426)

In the same vein as the former two writers, and bringing us explicitly to the defining concept of *democracy* that we pointed out in the second paragraph of this subsection, is Douglas Lummis' contribution to the WOMP/*Alternatives* debate. This author argued in his article "Development against Democracy", that economic development was by nature an anti-democratic force which generates inequality. As a working principle, instead, democracy promises much more in achieving justice, equality and diversity in the domains of economic and social life. Contrary to development's homogenising impressions, it generates new meanings of prosperity, beyond the mere economic, and as determined by different communities (see 1991: 59-61).

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[7] With these other writers we are in fact crossing the fine line between alternative development discourse and what is called 'post-development' discourse (see e.g. Nederveen Pieterse 1998: 360-364). Whereas they, unlike Sheth, have been arguing for the abandonment of the whole idea of 'development' and, thus, should more correctly be sorted under the banner of 'post-development', we nevertheless draw here on what can be taken as the common element between them and Sheth: the emphasis on radical democracy, popular participation, alternative community values and grassroots/people's movement actors. [Cf. here e.g. Nederveen Pieterse's (1998: 363) observation of the "inconsistencies" in post-development discourse and his analysis of one particular 'post-development' writer (Arturo Escobar), where he concluded that the latter ultimately gave "no clear delineation between anti-development and alternative development".]

Coming back to Sheth, we may note how he would also apply the notion of democracy as a defining concept. While not to the same extent as the above-mentioned three writers in the sense of rejecting outrightly the concept of 'development'[8], he observed that "(t)he crux of any politics for alternative development... [lay] in integrating into its theory an empirical model of democracy which treats the *legitimisation* of values and institutions as an open process" (1987: 164). In contrast to the alternative approaches referred to earlier, in which the dominant or counter-elites act as the legitimators of the institutional and normative structures in a society, this democratic model always presumes a society that allows the interplay of *various* legitimisation processes - "through critical analyses *as well as* through real-life conflicts, struggles and integrative movements of ideas and action" (ibid).

For Sheth it holds that the phenomenon of *grassroots movements*, as the representation of the concrete struggles of the people, is the locus from where a theory of action for alternative development will emerge. A basic condition for this to happen is for the activists of the movements to "become their own theorists and the theorists to find authentication of their thinking through their own role located within the movements" (1987: 165). Distinguishing, furthermore, between two broad types of grassroots movements, namely non-political developmental and non-party political formations, it is according to Sheth in the activities of organisations of the latter kind that the seeds of an alternative development politics are visible. However, while they invest their energies in issues that affect the poor, i.e. issues which are usually not taken up by political parties, for Sheth the crucial question remains whether such actions can move beyond the conventional political arena "of pressure groups, away from the power of the state and towards *the creation of people's own power and organizations*" (1987: 166-167; italics added). Drawing the following profile of alternative development on the basis of this statement, Sheth stipulated:

> Creative action for alternatives is most unlikely to come either from experts or expertise-oriented developmental groups or from any kind of political mobilization active within the state system. In my view, it can come only from non-state actors operating at the interface of the state and the society, the interface between politics and culture. Some experiments in this direction are being undertaken by various groups in Latin America and Asia. They focus primarily on generating new social

[8] See again the previous footnote.

> knowledge for alternative development, and on activating networks of people's organizations for working out their own solutions for the problems they face. The method employed is of dialogues, interactions and participative action research (PAR). (1987: 167)

In a concluding note Sheth observed that the existing grassroots movements for alternative development, such as in Latin America and Asia, were consequently shifting their battleground to *a larger arena of society and culture*. Their political agenda, beyond mainstream politics, "is of further democratization not only of the political institutions but of the family, the community, the workplace and society at large". Their political thinking does not stop at transforming the structures. It goes beyond this aspiration to achieve integrity of values and action at a personal level; the practice of life-styles appropriate to their idea of alternative development[9]. A 'life politics' that can best be described as *societics*, it constitutes the political activity of individuals and organisations directed to the transformation of consciousness and organisations, especially of the non-state organisations in society (1987: 168).

For Sheth, however, the proliferation of such actual movements for alternative development does not constitute the only remaining challenge. Striking a note that runs as a core through the WOMP/*Alternatives* debates, and that links the first meaning of development in these debates with the second set out below, he finally pointed out the need for a far more coordinated *coalition politics* between the grassroots movements for alternative development. The reason for this was that the grassroots movements for alternative development were still very embryonic and dispersed in character. For these movements the challenge remained *to work their new politics from the bottom up in order to let their impact be felt at the national and global levels*. In other words, a *macro theory* of transformative political action was required, "based on the values and practice of democracy and which has the synthes-

[9] Cf. here Gustavo Esteva's (one of the writers from the 'post-development' discursive framework referred to in footnote 7) identification of "hospitality" as the normative concept that ultimately defines his alternative community of peasants, urban marginals and de-professionalised intellectuals (see 1987: 137-140). Consequently, this similar emphasis on alternative community values also suggests the thin line between alternative development and post-development discourses in the context of WOMP/*Alternatives* debates.

ising potentials for integrating the perspective and actions of various issue-based movements in a larger framework of transformation" (1987: 168-169).

* * * * *

Again showing a close similarity with Korten's understanding of fourth generation development in the sense of integrating development discourse into global social movement and value discourse, but also going beyond Korten to focus more on the question of world order, is the *second* meaning of development in WOMP/*Alternatives* debates. Here, almost to the same extent as in the first meaning, development discourse appears to be *assimilated into wider political discourses of global governance and global institutional and structural transformation.*

We can begin by observing that it is a meaning which is well formulated in the editorial statement by Rajni Kothari in the first edition of *Alternatives*. In this statement, which set out the scope of the new journal and WOMP, Kothari made it clear that the concept of 'alternatives' goes beyond development discourse when he stated that:

> *Alternatives* is a conception *not just in the theory of development.* It entails *a model of and a perspective for world order and the transformation entailed for such a world order.* It is an exercise in values and their realization at various levels of reality, always taking account of cultural diversities but also of the unities that inform these diversities. It is not just a different kind of model for China or India or Tanzania (or Brazil) that one is seeking out though no doubt these and other models provide a very large scope for learning and criticism and action. One is also concerned about the making of a different kind of world conceived as a set of interrelationships. Without seeking to alter these interrelationships the effort to alter individual societies is not likely to go very far. This is the great change that has taken place in human affairs, the *global setting* in which they have to be conducted. (1975: 5; italics added)

Following from Kothari's initial formulation, in WOMP/*Alternatives* debates *the question of global structural and institutional transformation would thus take precedence over the issue of development.* In this sense, it could be taken as the response to D. L. Sheth's above-mentioned recognition of the need for a macro theory to address the need for change at the global level. In close resemblance to the principle of radical democracy spelled out in the first meaning above, it ought to be an

approach to world order transformation, as spelled out some twenty years later by one of the prominent spokespersons of WOMP, that acknowledges and celebrates *difference* and resists "totalizing modes of thought, organization, and technological capability, whether these are rooted in secularisms of the West or in the fundamentalisms that hide out in the traditions of the great world traditions" (Falk 1994: 146). In other words, in terms of Sheth and the other writers of the first meaning's concern, it is an approach that aims to achieve institutional and structural change at a *global* level, precisely to complement, protect and sustain the multiple of different spaces at the local level.

It would, however, be stated in WOMP/*Alternatives* debates that the emphasis on difference does not mean the discontinuation of all descriptive and predictive discourse. World order discourse (in the alternative sense) indeed implies some descriptive and predictive element pertaining to the social totality and aggregate common good of humanity as a whole (political, economic, social and cultural) (Falk 1994: 146). To reflect on a political project to constitute a global polity, could very well be regarded as "necessary to the construction of a radical imaginary" (Ruiz 1994: 254).

It can be said that in WOMP/*Alternatives* debates the descriptive and predictive element is, ultimately, rather to be found in these debates' drawing of the *contours* of the *alternative world order* that they envision, based on the guiding principle of plurality. As evident from an article by Lester Ruiz, in WOMP discourse the affirmation of *plurality* constitutes a two-fold significance. Ruiz pointed out that the principle of plurality, on the one hand presupposes the recognition of different centres of power[10] challenging the centralising logics in many of modernity's projects. These different centres of power function as dislocatory practices that put in question the institutional logics that are hegemonic, and they underscore the historical and contingent character of these logics and practices. On the other hand, plurality also points to different constructions of community and identity, alternative forms of knowledge and being, and different political strategies (1994: 254).

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[10] From a constructive/proactive point of view, David Held, another writer from the WOMP/*Alternatives* circle, emphasised the need for a "politics of empowerment" (1994: 221). He subsequently identified "seven clusters of rights" that "are necessary to enable people to participate on free and equal terms in the regulation of their own associations: health, social, cultural, civil, economic, pacific, and political rights" (1994: 228).

But, and this can be taken to be the ultimate drift of Ruiz's analysis, drawing the contours does not mean spelling out the contents of an alternative world order. Whereas (as suggested by the above description) the functioning and nature of the existing order clearly points to what an alternative world order should *not* be, the principle of plurality spells out the *limits* to any attempt to determine the contents of an alternative order. As Ruiz pointed out, this principle "underscore not only the impossibility of a fixed positivity but of genuinely other spaces for the construction of transformative cultural practices". For here, similar to the principle of radical democracy in the first meaning above, all fixed imageries can only be defined by the yet undefined specificities of the multiplicity of subjects (in a world of difference) and their dislocatory practices:

> Precisely because of this multiplicity of subjects and subject positions, which function as dislocatory practices, we understand that our frameworks and perspectives - indeed, our preferred worlds and transition strategies - are radically contingent, precarious, historical. We are brought face to face with our end, with our limits... the fact of our limits puts us in proximity with what might be called the constitutive outside of the limit itself, which is an absence. But, this absence is not a lack. In fact, it is the dimension of mystery - of the nonconceptualizable, of the unimaginable - that is the condition for articulating transformative cultural practices that are fundamentally new and better. (1994: 254-255)

From a different angle Richard Falk, in particular, came to define the contours of an alternative world order in WOMP/*Alternatives* debates in terms of a discourse on *values*. In contrast to what he referred to as the hegemonic and totalising nature of post-Cold War geopolitics, which is also coined as the 'new world order', Falk emphasised the different category of world order thinking to which WOMP belongs (1994: 145-146). Whereas the WOMP cannot escape a certain descriptive and prescriptive element, as indicated earlier, it remains in essence a *normative* project and not a hegemonic one (in the totalising sense). It is normative in the sense that it has in view a "(n)ew world order... to be created by a combination of social forces acting effectively and on behalf of such *world order values as non-violence, economic and social justice, human rights and democracy, and environmental quality*". It is also normative in the sense that it is informed and inspired by a moral "desire to improve the human condition by direct political action, deploying means that reject violence,

respect truth, and rest their confidence upon democracy as both process and outcome" (1994: 146).

It thus follows from Falk's definition that in WOMP/*Alternatives* debates the contours of an alternative world order is most pertinently defined by a particular set of global values. Being *global* or *universal* in nature, through these values the multiple actors for an alternative world order must overcome their 'politics of difference' and find a *common* political purpose, but without forsaking their different identities and localities again.

Subsequently, in the context of such a global values discourse 'development' (in accordance with Rajni Kothari's initial statement) *would still be taken as a defining concept* in WOMP/*Alternatives* debates, albeit as only *one* element of a broader, integrated package. We may note how this is, for instance, clearly illustrated in an article by Roger Coate, Chadwick Alger and Ronnie Lipschutz, in which these authors presented a rather favourable picture of an ongoing process towards a new global values construct. According to these authors new nations, states and movements, in the context of UN flora and elsewhere, had increasingly gained access to an ongoing dialogue on global values in global governance, thereby shaping definitions of values that have acquired growing global relevance and legitimacy. According to Coate et al. it is now possible to summarise this dialogue in terms of four widely accepted global values: *peace* (non-violence), *development* (economic well-being) *human rights* and *ecological balance* (1996: 102-103).

The above-mentioned authors proceeded by pointing out that in recent years the latter four values had in fact been integrated into what is, by now, largely a *single* dialogue. They argued that it was increasingly accepted by peace movements that the full meaning of peace does not only pertain to the notion of non-violence, but also to development, human rights and ecological balance. At the same time, it was increasingly accepted that human rights must include not only civil or political rights, but also economic, social and cultural rights, and environmental justice. But significantly, the notion of development had also gone through a continual process of redefinition, from Western economic growth models to self-reliance of Third World states, to fulfilling the basic needs of people, to people deciding for themselves what their basic needs are (i.e. local self-reliance). And to this a fourth significant

development towards a single values construct could be added, namely the integration of ecological balance into a single dialogue. Coate et al. argued that as a consequence of ongoing dialogue about its meaning, ecological balance had subsumed the dimensions of development, human rights and peace. But also, as significant as the latter ecological determination had been the tendency by many involved in the present effort to define global values to use a broadly defined notion of peace as a paramount global value that is inclusive of all the above-mentioned four value dimensions (ibid).

Thus, in WOMP/*Alternatives* debates *development has come to be referred to as a global value, shaped by but also shaping other global values*. This observation, as in the case of Korten's depiction of fourth generation development, brings us finally back to an integration of development discourse into social movement discourse. Viewing 'development' as an explicit value, would at first glance appear to contradict the assimilation of this concept into democratic discourse in the first meaning set out above. At the same time this tension between the two meanings would seem to be dissolved, at least partly, by the direct link that is made in WOMP/*Alternatives* debates between values and the new social movements.

The case in point is well made in an article by Richard Falk on "The Global Promise of Social Movements", in which this author identified the following "mutually reinforcing set of predominant features" to shape a transformed world: *security*, *development*, *environment*, *governance* and *worldview* (or *ethos*). Thus, as in the case of Coate et al., 'development' would be identified by Falk as one aspect of a broader 'value package' that is to define the contours of an alternative world order. In addition Falk relied on the new social movements to actualise the different aspects or values, including development. For him these movements presently embody "our best hopes for challenging established and oppressive political, economic, and cultural arrangements at levels of social complexity, from the interpersonal to the international" (1987: 173). Moreover, and particularly hopeful for the actualisation of the above-mentioned aspects or values, according to Falk a process (much similar to Coate et al's identification of a single, integrated dialogue on values above) has evolved by which "the new social movements are losing some of their particularity by expressing a certain overall commitment to the future that draws on common elements" (1987: 189).

In WOMP/*Alternatives* debates, following Falk, it can therefore firstly be said that the new social movements have been valued as the primary *actors* or carriers of the core values framing their world order perspective. Secondly, and derived from the first point, it can be said that a core 'alternative' value such as development has come to be reinterpreted in terms of the new social movements politics. For Falk, it is by means of such a reinterpretation that no need remains "to conceive of development in an austere form that reduces the world to a common subsistence standard, an ordeal of grayness" (1987: 191). He further explained:

> Development can be shaped in many satisfying, acceptable directions, but the constructive use of resources for positive human needs is a unifying theme.
>
> This ideal contrasts with current actualities: wasteful resources, and environmentally-destructive patterns of production; dedication of resources to military and paramilitary purposes, and to luxuries despite large sectors of acute poverty within existing states and in certain regions. The prevailing forms of social accounting and market mechanisms allocate resources in a manner that frustrates efforts to use resources for human betterment in an ecological-sustainable manner... It seems possible to conceive of the emergence of developmental pluralism that is constrained by a shared cultural notion of human need and dignity. Without sentimentalizing the distant past, indigenous peoples seemed to achieve such developmental balance in a variety of societal and tribal forms, in settings informed by reverence for nature and by an underlying ethos of stewardship and conservation. Whether post-modern society, and societies at various stages of industrialization, can reconstitute such a cultural grounding for positive development is uncertain. At the very least, *social movements seem alive to this crucial reorientation based on values*, not on lifting encumbrances from the operations of the market or assuring that production processes are nominally controlled by the working class. (ibid; italics added)

It follows that, in Falk's interpretation, the notion of development does not completely dissolve in democratic and other socio-political discourse as in the first meaning set out above. It is sustained as an economic- and political-specific concept that in terms of Falk's definition, indicates the constructive use of economic resources for positive human ends. Thus, in this sense, development obtains universal meaning and is applied to human society as a whole. At the centre of this redefinition of development, which is both potential and dormant, are the new social movements (for Falk). They are the agents of a new 'value politics' that through their converging and mobilising dynamics, are also reorientating the meaning of development (such as

informing it with the value of ecological sustainability). At the same time, however, they do not contradict the pluralistic principle that determine the first meaning set out above. They represent, in their transnational and global manifestations, a continuation of the non- or anti-statist politics in the first meaning (see Falk 1987: 175). They represent a 'globalisation from below' and depend on the democratising struggles in local spaces for their fuller articulation (ibid). They incorporate in their ideological and political struggles the pluralistic cultural, social and ecological meanings in local spaces and make it the basis of their global articulations. Moreover, in their converging dynamics they shape (or are envisioned to shape) the meaning of development.

6.2.2 New religious appraisal

In what can be nothing more here than a brief overview of such expressions, we may note how a positive reappraisal of religion as a force of transformation also constitutes a significant feature of WOMP/*Alternatives* debates[11]. As in the case of Korten's perspective on fourth generation strategic development, writers of these debates have likewise been confronted with the question of the *actors* that will promote and establish the new global values construct that they are envisioning. They, as in the case of Korten, have appreciated the role that religious traditions and institutions at their best[12] can play as allies and expressions of the new social movements, the primary agents of the values that are appreciated.

At the WOMP workshop mentioned earlier[13] Robert Johansen, for instance, expressed the positive inclination towards religion in WOMP/*Alternatives* circles well. In a fourth of six suggestions for strengthening the implementation aspects of the Project's past focus on preferred worlds, he focused on the role of religion. It was Johansen's evaluation that the participants in WOMP needed "to give more attention to the role of religious traditions in resisting and in promoting the implementation of preferred values" (1994: 158). Johansen argued that religious traditions disposed of enormous

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[11] The bulk of articles from this circle that focus on religion are found in the second issue of *Alternatives* XIII (1988).

[12] As the discussion has indicated to a limited extent in the last number of paragraphs in this subsection (6.2.2), such positive appraisal of the role of religion does by no means imply that the writers concerned are underplaying the countervailing effects of religion as a powerful source of fundamentalist thought, conflict and violence.

[13] See again footnote 5.

assets - material, organisational, educational and spiritual - that can be employed for good or ill in shaping a new world order. Many affinities also existed between religious groups and the Project that have not been utilised. He explained:

> Religious traditions are value based, as is WOMP. Religious traditions at their best extol the value of human life and justice, despite the tendency of political and religious leaders to use their own traditions to deny the implementation of those values for others. The major religious traditions preach against viewing the state as the highest authority, as does the Project. At their best they stand above or against national parochialism; in this posture they parallel the transnational emphasis of the Project. Religious leaders are often experienced in calling for major attitudinal change, which the Project also seeks. Both attempt to develop support for doing what is "good," even when the political effectiveness of such actions is not immediately evident. (1994: 159)

In an earlier *Alternatives* article Richard Falk, in a similar positive way, drew the link between the new social movements and contemporary progressive religion. According to Falk, the efforts by social movements to reshape the cultural ground of politics have not only set new challenges and opportunities for churches to join in the process of resistance and renewal, but churches and clergy themselves had, throughout the 1980s, provided resources, facilities and crucial encouragement to the social movements. For Falk, furthermore, a religious element could also be seen as "congenial with the anti-materialist, anti-secular character of the new movements, as well as with their universalistic sense of human identity" (1987: 185). Pointing in a later article to the role of the churches in democratic and political struggles in, amongst others, Nicaragua, El Salvador, South Africa, South Korea and the Philippines, Falk concluded that a Christian presence had in fact emerged "at the centre of radical opposition politics" in many contexts of the Third World. Yet, it was not only in the Third World that a constructive pattern of religion and political interpenetration had occurred. Falk subsequently pointed to the case of the Solidarity Movement in Poland, but also to a less focused, "yet... definite reassertion of religious presence on many political battlefields" in Western Europe and the United States (1988: 383-385).

For Falk, then, the present-day "extraordinary recovery of religious ways of understanding human experience" could be understood as a dimension of a new

postmodern societal condition or awareness (1988: 379-380). Although he himself distinguished between varieties of postmodern expressions[14], postmodernism could, according to Falk, also be understood as an emerging new sensitivity and political dynamics which are reacting against "the destructiveness and spiritual dryness of modernism" (1988: 381) and, consequently, are seeking "to recreate a human future by introducing considerations of ecology and spirituality" (1988: 380). In terms of a broad categorisation, postmodern religion could be viewed as existing in two forms. Firstly, it had manifested itself *within the main religious tradition* through new interpretations of the 'spiritual' that places emphasis on the liberation of individuals and groups from oppressive arrangements (such as in liberation theology[15], of which the above-mentioned participation of churches in political and democratic struggles in Third and First World contexts can be taken as expressions). Secondly, it had also asserted itself *outside of formal religious traditions* through a new overall interpretation of the meaning of life, one that goes beyond rationalist inquiry and derives significance from its close connection with nature (as expressed in 'deep ecology', for instance) (1988: 381)[16].

We may conclude this brief overview with a more pertinent statement by writers of the WOMP/*Alternatives* circle of what the nature or profile of the religious formation they recognised as an important partner in a 'project' of global transformation (following Johansen's statement above, but also Falk's positive appraisal), should be and should not be. Adamant that the dark side and countervailing effects of religion should be clearly spelled out[17], Falk, for instance, emphasised that fundamentalisms were obviously excluded, "those religiously-oriented initiatives that rely on violence, seek to transform the state into a theocracy, and fail to incorporate the whole of humanity into their professed imagery of salvation" (1987: 185). Adhering to such an

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[14] Another type or variety of postmodernism, which underlines our comment in footnote 12, is, according to Falk, one that reasserts the centrality of literal readings of religious interpretations of human experience. A primary example of this kind of postmodernism has been the theocratic regime in Khomeini's Iran (1988: 380).

[15] See in this regard Pablo Richard's reflection (i.e. in an *Alternatives* article in the same issue mentioned in footnote 11) on the significance of the Ecclesial Base Communities (CEBs) in Latin America, which is discussed in more detail in the first part of 7.3.1 in this study.

[16] Elsewhere in this article Falk also defined this second form of religious postmodernism as predominantly anti-ecclesiastical and nontheistic in its expression and belief, but which nonetheless "tap into religious feeling in the sense of confirming the sacred and viewing human destiny in nonmaterialist spiritual respects". He furthermore referred to the Green Movement as a good example of this kind of religious postmodernism (1988: 380).

[17] See again footnote 12.

all-inclusive incorporation, the religious ideal thus pertains to an anti-imperialist and non-expansionist religious attitude and practice that, in the words of Ashis Nandy, evolves "the recovery of religious tolerance" that sustains "diversities and co-existence in the matter of faith". Accordingly, it points to a rediscovering of the non-Western meaning of "secularism" of "equal respect for all religions", implying a "space for a continuous dialogue among religious traditions and between the religious and the secular - that, in the ultimate analysis, each major faith... includes *within* it an in-house version of the other faiths both as an internal criticism and as a reminder of the diversity of the theory of transcendence" (1988: 180-181).

We may finally point to Lester Ruiz's notion of theology as a critical theory and practice of transformation for an understanding of religion in the positive sense (i.e. in the context of WOMP/*Alternatives* understanding). Making a fundamental distinction between religion *per se* and theology, the latter denoting *critical reflection* on the religious and human totality, Ruiz's positive conception relating to religion, pertains to a critical theological discourse which "is at once public, critical and transformative". It rejects the uncritical identification of theological and political discourse, while at the same time "celebrat[ing] their inextricable relatedness". In this sense, it expresses itself as a 'politics of transformation' which, ultimately, is directed towards the "creation and nurtur[ing] of "fundamentally new and better relationships"", that is, relationships between human beings, between humanity and nature, and between the human and the sacred (1988: 156-157).

6.3 The 'beyond a social movements approach'[18]

The special place denoted by David Korten and the writers from the circle of WOMP/*Alternatives* to the role of the new social movements in global transformation - into which the question of (local and global) alternative and people-centred development largely assimilates - has clearly been spelled out up to this point in the chapter. Yet, this cannot be a complete analysis of the perspectives coming particularly from the latter circle, as we may also find amongst its writers a broader perspective that emphasises what writers outside this circle have come to formulate as

[18] This subsection represents to a great extent a continuing discussion of WOMP/*Alternatives* perspectives. However, the reliance on publications outside the journal *Alternatives* and perspectives by writers that are not necessarily (see next footnote) directly associated with the intellectual circle of WOMP/*Alternatives*, makes it necessary to separate the discussion here from the discussion of the aspects in 6.2.

the need to move "beyond a social movements approach" (Shaw 1994: 647-667; see also Finger 1994: 48-65; Walker 1994: 669-700).

In terms of a formulation by Martin Shaw, one such writer outside the direct circle of WOMP/*Alternatives*, it is contended that, while the study of social movements is indeed important, a 'social movements approach' which privileges social movements as uniquely important social phenomena for transformation, "has serious limitations for the study of global and interstate politics". As a corrective it is argued instead "that *a broader and more complex 'civil society' approach is likely to be more theoretically adequate and empirically sustainable*" (1994: 665; see also 651-653; italics added).

With reference to the intellectual circle of WOMP/*Alternatives*, it can be said that Shaw and other writers' (cf. e.g. Walker 1994: 669-700; Lipschutz 1992: 389-420[19]) concept of a civil society approach, or rather a *global* civil society approach to transformation, has come to *problematise* the prospects of a new and alternative world order and values construct envisioned and worked for by this circle. Without totally neglecting the claims that such a process (of realising a new and alternative world order and values construct) has in fact come into momentum particularly through the dynamics of the new social movements, a civil society approach otherwise emphasises the fundamental need *for a more effective and deliberate coalition of progressive, alternative actors or forces to push forward the true global reach of the alternative agenda.*

In accordance with our observation in the first paragraph of this section, at this point it should more pertinently be pointed out how writers from the circle of WOMP/*Alternatives* in fact articulate the need for a *coalition politics* that encompasses more than the sum total of social movements: their conclusion that global transformative action "will have to come from global civil society - from all its levels" including the United Nations system (Coate, Alger and Lipschutz 1996: 118),

[19] Of the three writers referred to here, the latter two have also published in *Alternatives* and Walker, in particular, can be associated with the closer circle of WOMP. However, in this case they constitute a distinguishable group together with Shaw, i.e. on the basis that the references here represent publications in a journal (*Millennium*) other than *Alternatives*.

their proposal for a "global political party" of issue-specific oppositional institutions and organisations[20] (Kreml and Kegley 1996: 123-133).

Including a more explicit problematisation of the new social movements, a pessimistic view by Rajni Kothari, a central figure in WOMP/*Alternatives* debates, furthermore illustrates the point. Kothari concluded that "the biggest failure of what are known as new social movements.. [lay] in *their inability to become part of a united political movement*" (1993: 134; italics added). Instead, the new social movements have been incapable of defying the basic establishment and have been *coopted* by the mainstream system (1993: 131-133). Elsewhere in this writing, Kothari reiterated his point of the need for a more effective global counter-politics, stating that to him:

> ...the real answer to the present turbulence is the only civilized alternative to both the globalizing and ethnicizing trends, namely a worldwide federal democratic movement, both political and social, which alone is capable of responding to the demands for the self-determination of regions and ethnic groups as well as the struggles for equity and justice. Only such a movement can respond to the genuine need of transcending national boundaries and experimenting with various supranational formations that can deal with new socioeconomic needs, new ideas of organizing human collectivities, and the growth of new identities. (1993: 128)

Against this background we can return to the concept of global civil society as expression of the ultimate relational and strategic formation in the 'alternative project' for transformation. Taking firstly as our guiding framework perspectives from publications outside the journal *Alternatives*, but secondly also from *Alternatives* publications, we propose that the perspective on a *global civil society approach* can be summarised along the following points:

(i) It appears in this approach that an *emphasis on social movements, grassroots, national and transnational, remains vital.* It is argued that the contemporary social movements do not only represent a transformative 'politics of difference'. In terms of R. B. J. Walker's identification, these movements also represent a "politics of connections" and a "politics of movement" that are to be regarded as absolutely crucial to a transformative, normative global politics. As Walker pointed out, while a "politics of connections" does not necessarily indicate a "politics of a united front or a counterhegemonic strategy", social movements do indeed connect, converse, learn

[20] See in this regard also footnote 25 in this chapter.

from each other, and sometimes develop partial solidarities. Moreover, these movements are the embodiment of a "politics of movement" that cannot be fully captured by territorial form and surpass the spatiotemporal relations and identities of modernity (1994: 699). As such, they represent a politics that may be located in a particular space and place, but which, at the same time, are also in a process of constant dislocation, always on the move, always expanding, always linking somewhere while dislocating again and moving elsewhere/somewhere/everywhere. In Walker's words:

> A politics of movement cannot be grasped through categories of containment. A politics of connections cannot be grasped through a metaphysics of inclusions and exclusion, whether of insides and outsides or aboves and belows... An empirical analysis of social movements, and an interpretation of their significance for what a world politics might become, does not have to be bound by the prejudices of modernity. On the contrary, these prejudices can only ensure that the fine lines separating us from them can never be transgressed. An empirical reading of social movements might show that these fine lines are being transgressed all the time. (1994: 700)

To conclude this first point, it can thus be suggested that Walker's notion of a "politics of movement" and a "politics of connections" may well be extended to our defining concept in this study of a 'politics of ideas'[21], whereby social movements in their local, national and transnational manifestations are in fact spreading and establishing a new construct of common values and ideas throughout the world, which is to be seen as the ultimate determinant factor for positive structural change[22]. Moreover, notwithstanding the absence of apparent links among social movements, such a 'politics of ideas' can be said to constitute a "politics of connections" in the strongest sense of the word, as it slowly brings into existence a new global values construct (together with other actors from civil society!), the ultimate binding factor of a decisive global transformative politics.

(ii) It appears in a global civil society approach *that the actual transformative role of social movements must also be problematised, however.* In this sense a 'global civil

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[21] See again pp. 8-9 of this study.

[22] We are here again referring to our point of departure that values and ideas are to be seen as the determinant factor in achieving structural change. See again footnote 24 (chapter 5) and the corresponding paragraph in the main part of the discussion.

society approach' directly challenges the overestimation of social movements in what has been identified above as a social movement approach. More specifically, the former approach challenges and problematises the notion of a grand political strategy of transformation with which social movements might be associated. It appeals to Walker's rectification of what a "politics of connections" and a "politics of movement" are *not*:

> It makes intuitive sense to countenance the spatial extension of a movement here to a movement there, to envisage a convergence of progressive forces acting across those merely artificial boundaries that offend planetary integrity and species identity. Similarities and connections are all too readily translated into grand philosophies of history that point upwards to the projected vision of a global civil society, a global governance, and a properly world politics. (1994: 699)

Following from the latter note of qualification by Walker, it can therefore be said that a global civil society approach raises the following doubts about the actual impact of social movements in a world politics:

In reaction to those points of views favouring or emphasising the significance of social movements, a global civil society approach as a basic first question comes to ask whether social movements are in fact challenging "the constitutive practices of modern politics" (Walker 1994: 672), that is, a challenge that is also to a great extent refuted by perspectives in "Critical Political Economy"[23]. To quote Walker again:

> Judged from the real heights of statecraft, social movements are but mosquitos on the evening breeze, irritants to those who claim maturity and legitimacy at the centres of political life. Some mosquitos, of course, can have deadly effects. Some movements, it can be claimed, have had tremendous impact on states, societies, economies and cultures. But even large movements are difficult to take seriously once compared to the might and reach of a properly world politics. (1994: 669)

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[23] In an essay entitled accordingly, IPE theorist, Robert Cox (who has also come to favour the new social movements (!) as agents of creative change - see p. 45 of this essay) applied Karl Polyani's analysis of nineteenth and twentieth century capitalism to come to an understanding of post-Cold War global society. He stated:

> Polyani has given us a framework for thinking about the prospects of the current project of neo-liberalism in the global economy. The key criterion today is competitiveness; and derived from that are universal imperatives for deregulation, privatization, and the restriction of public intervention in economic processes. Neo-liberalism is transforming states from being buffers between external economic forces and the domestic economy into agencies for adapting domestic economies to the exigencies of the global economy. So now the market appears to be bursting free from the bonds of national societies, to subject global society to its laws. The results on the global level are like those Polyani saw in nineteenth-century Britain: greater polarization of rich and poor, disintegration of pre-existing social bonds, and alienation. (1995: 39)

As a series of further negations of an absolutised social movement approach, a global civil society approach similarly comes to ask (i) whether many of the movements (such as the green movement, Green Peace) have not been coopted by the dominant and mainstream (Kothari 1993: 133-138); (ii) whether social movements are in fact political actors at all (Shaw 1994: 652; Kothari 1993: 134; Sheth 1987: 166-167); (iii) given the differentiations among social movements - i.e. the "specificity of locations and traditions" characterising them (Walker 1994: 690), their episodic, and in many cases, narrow 'political objectives', and their tendency towards a middle class bias particularly in the North (Shaw 1994: 653-654) - whether they are in fact instruments of mass mobilisation (Shaw 1994: 653) and in any way representatives of a focused and central politics of transformation; and (iv) crucially, whether they (social movements) are not *dependent* on the *other actors* of civil society as well as formal political parties for their impact, for bringing about the world of transformed relations, policies and structures that they are envisioning. It is in view of such problematisation that we can find much orientation in the following concluding statement by Martin Shaw of social movement's dependence on a wider range of actors and institutions for their meaningful political articulation:

> Social movements depend closely on the other institutions of civil society. On the one hand, although they are widely seen as bypassing traditional institutions such as parties, churches and trade unions, they also exist in relation to these. They are often dependent on political parties, in particular, in order to translate social movement demands into political agenda items which have a serious chance of turning into state policy. Social movements also depend on a wider ideological discourse, which develops through university intellectuals but also through interchange with Green and traditional left-wing parties, through the mass media, and through other networks in civil society. In this way, as in others, social movements cannot be seen as completely distinctive social phenomena, but are embedded in the larger complex of relationships in civil society. They overlap and share many characteristics with other civil society institutions. (1994: 666)

(iii) It follows from the second point above that a global civil society approach thus *recognises the dependence of social movements on a wider range of civil society and political actors for meaningful political articulation.* Stated differently, it follows that this approach *is captured by the basic principle of interdependence, whereby it is acknowledged that all actors or institutions of civil society, including states and*

political parties that are serious about a new sustainable and just world, are all dependent on each other to obtain their common goal.

Stipulating such interdependence we are, however, reminded by Martin Shaw that the existence of global civil society is still more potential than actual and that it is (regrettably) only following relatively slowly on economic globalisation, which has gathered very rapid momentum (1994: 655). Nevertheless, at the same time Shaw also identified at least three major types of institutions that comprise an *emergent* (albeit not yet fully developed) global civil society. Being expressions of already transnational (global) linkages, networks and collective organisations, they are: (a) formal organisations linking national institutions (organisations of parties, churches, unions, professions, educational bodies, media, etc.); (b) linkages of informal networks and movements (e.g. women's and peace groups/movements); and (c) globalist organisations that are established with a specific global orientation, global membership and activity of global scope (e.g. Amnesty, Greenpeace, Medicines sans Frontières, etc.) (1994: 650).

In a global civil society approach, however, the quest for greater political action remains. Following Shaw, it does not disregard the fact that a mobilising process towards a global civil society - a collectivity of interlinking groups of actors in globalised political, economic and social processes - may have come into motion already. But it otherwise poses the remaining challenge for movements and institutions of civil society *to purposefully and strategically work for more effective and binding relationships, networks and coalitions that may ultimately capacitate them to meaningfully and in a decisive way (as a collective force) influence and change interstate relationships and the process of global governance.* As authors Coate, Alger and Lipschutz have made the point, in final conclusion:

> What remains a major challenge is how such bodies [from civil society aspiring/pursuing a sustainable development approach], as well as other even more amorphous collectivities such as scientists and opinion communities, can be integrated effectively into global governance processes and the work of IGOs. In addition, global norms as they relate to people-centred development need to bloom from the roots up, not from the top down. For this actually to happen, the numerous and varied social groupings with which people most closely identify in the context of any particular issue setting - whether they be transnational social movements, religious orders, economic groupings, legal/political units, or whatever - need to be

> viewed and treated as acceptable partners for transnational cooperation and collaboration. (1996: 111-112)

6.4 An alternative communication dynamics

> The key point is that electronic media (including not only television and radio, but all forms of communication, such as newspapers and the Internet) have become the privileged space of politics. Not that all politics can be reduced to images, sounds, or symbolic manipulation. But, without it, there is no chance of winning or exercising power. Thus, everybody ends up playing the same game, although not in the same way or with the same purpose. (Manuel Castells 1997: 311)

This chapter cannot be complete without returning to the issue of communication, an aspect that we have seen, stands at the centre of David Korten's perspective on fourth generation strategic development but, at the same time, is not presented by him as a broader and more worked out theory of communication and development[24].

Having so far largely focused in the discussion on perspectives from the intellectual circle of WOMP/*Alternatives*, the intention to focus here more specifically on the aspect of communication, should first of all lead us to point out the *absence* of this aspect in WOMP/*Alternatives* debates. By contrast, instead of bringing this aspect into its debates, it appears that attempts toward further innovative conceptualisation about the question of *coherent political activity* (such as expressed in the global civil society approach) have in this circle rather gone in what can ultimately be taken to be an opposite direction[25]. In contrast to Korten's emphasis on the aspect of communication - which refers to the means of interaction, to strategy as well as to the

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[24] See again footnote 6.

[25] This is, for instance, well illustrated by an *Alternatives* article in which the authors, William Kreml and Charles Kegley, addressed what we pointed out in the previous subsection to be at the centre of a 'global civil society approach', namely *the remaining problem of coherent political activity* by 'alternative' actors in the quest for global transformation. Their proposal, consequently, is the constitution of a "global political party" that will consist of "issue-specific oppositional groups" (such as Greenpeace, Sierra Club International, SANE, the Rainforest Action Network, Conservation International, the Nature Conservancy, the World Wildlife Fund, Survival International, Save the Children, Habitat for Humanity, Physicians for Social Responsibility, and similar organisations) along with nation-states and regional political organisations that are prepared to participate in a more democratic world (1996: 133). Referring to their project of constituting a 'global political party' as the "next step" (see the title of their article) in achieving the coherent political opposition that has been envisioned in WOMP/*Alternatives* debates (see 1996: 124-133), Kreml and Kegley's article presents a good example of a continued effort toward innovative conceptualisation in this intellectual circle that appears rather ignorant of the social-theoretical analysis and perspectives on strategic mobilisation that are provided by writers from the alternative field of communication. It is a neglect, both from the part of such a further attempt towards strategic conceptualisation and WOMP/*Alternatives* debates in general, that all the more seems peculiar in view of the emphasis on values, ethics and ideas in this intellectual circle.

new technologies of communication - a complete *lack of perspective* is to be found in the circle of WOMP/*Alternatives* debates.

With a view to expose and fill in this lack of perspective, but also to complement and further work out Korten's emphasis on the aspect of communication, the discussion in this chapter finally draws on new communication perspectives in the social sciences. Constituting a theoretical strand or grouping that clearly stands separate from the circle of WOMP/*Alternatives*, it can be noted how writers of this group are *not less 'alternative'*, in the sense of being in opposition or critical towards the mainstream, of favouring the new social movements as central actors of (alternative) transformation, and of being interested in the construction of a global civil society similar to what has been expressed in 6.3. Yet, their angle or approach to these components of the alternative debate is different. *They present a social theoretical understanding that can be taken as most appropriate (authentic) in terms of the dynamics that determine contemporary global society, and a strategic (fourth generation) mobilisation around the new social movements and a global civil society in embryo.* To highlight their vital contribution to the alternative debate by means of the following points:

Firstly, in the new communication perspectives writers have come to emphasise, all in one way or another, to the broader 'alternative' intellectual circle the need to reorientate itself in terms of the new social structure or dynamics that characterise contemporary society. It is a new understanding of society, both in view of the actual nature thereof *and* in view of effective strategic mobilisation by alternative actors in this society, that someone like Manuel Castells, in his recent profound social analysis, came to label as *the 'Network Society'*[26]. Thus the vital point of Castells' analysis is that traditional statist and modernist readings have become obsolete in understanding contemporary society sufficiently. Modern society has undergone a far-reaching paradigm change from industrial society to *informational* society:

> This new social structure is associated with the emergence of a new mode of development, informationalism, historically shaped by the restructuring of the capitalist mode of production towards the end of the twentieth century. (1996: 14)

[26] We are referring here to Castells' three volume series, *The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture*, which was published in the second half of the 1990s. In this series of publications the notion of 'The Network Society' is taken by Castells as basic concept of his analysis, as also evident from the title of Volume I in the series, *The Rise of the Network Society*. In this section we will use this first volume and the second volume, *The Power of Identity*, as sources.

It follows that the new informational society sustains a close relationship with *capitalism*[27] and, in essence, represents the *consolidation* of the capitalist mode of production in reconstructed form (Castells 1996: 18-20; see also Dawson and Bellamy Foster 1996: 42-54; McChesney 1996: 2-7). As a result of its merging with the new information technology, it now becomes possible for the capitalist mode of production to, for the first time in history, shape "social relationships over the entire planet" (Castells 1996: 471). It is a brand of capitalism that is profoundly different from its historical predecessors in two ways: it is global and structured largely around a network of financial flows (ibid). In this global network capital operates within a cycle of investment and profit extraction, which, in turn, is reverted back to the meta-network of financial flows, "where all capital is equalized in the commodified democracy of profit-making" (Castells 1996: 472). Characterised, furthermore, by its utterly *arbitrary* character, in the sense of the constant change of winners and losers in the economic cycle, this mode of capitalism greatly relies on knowledge and information generated and enhanced by information technology (ibid). In turn, as communication becomes the heart of global capitalism (McChesney 1996: 5), there is what Michael Dawson and John Bellamy Foster called the "scramble for control of the new communications system" (1996: 51). In the words of Cees Hamelink, the communication industry takes on "economic significance" (1994: 58) and consolidates itself through mega-merging in the global capitalist market (1994: 80-92; see also Dawson and Bellamy Foster 1996: 44; McChesney 1996: 2-7). A relationship of *interdependence* and *mutual reinforcement* between capital and new high-technology exists, which Castells points out:

> ... is the concrete meaning of the articulation between the capitalist mode of production and the informational mode of development... It is in the interaction between investment in profitable firms and using accumulated profits to make them fructify in the global financial networks that the process of accumulation lies. So it depends on productivity, on competitiveness, and on adequate information on investment and long-term planning in every sector. High-technology firms depend on financial resources to go on with their endless drive toward innovation, productivity, and competitiveness. Financial capital, acting directly through financial institutions or indirectly through the dynamics of stock exchange markets, conditions the fate of

[27] Given the primary role which the process of capitalist restructuring has historically played in accelerating, channeling and shaping the information technological paradigm, it can, according to Castells (1996: 18), be adequately characterised as *information capitalism*.

> high-technology industries. On the other hand, technology and information are decisive tools in generating profits and in appropriating market shares. *Thus, financial capital and high-technology, industrial capital are increasingly interdependent, even if their modes of operation are specific to each industry.* (1996: 472-473; italics added)

Secondly, in this world of information capitalism[28] politics and its actors have to find themselves anew. Consequently, it does not mean the end of politics, but the restructuring of politics in accordance to the dynamics of the information capitalist system (see Castells 1997: 310-312). It is a mode of regulation in which politics and people, at first sight, are subservient to the interest of the capitalist system. While not unimportant actors in this new dispensation, nation-states, for one, are compelled to ally themselves closely with global economic interests (Castells 1997: 307-308; 1996: 88-90) and "accommodate the claims of the large corporate users of world communication" (Hamelink 1994: 109). In the process their relation to their own communities and citizens remains ambivalent, as they find themselves in a catch-22 situation:

> (T)he more states emphasize communalism, the less effective they become as co-agents of a global system of shared power. The more they triumph in the planetary scene, in close partnership with the agents of globalization, the less they represent their national constituencies. (Castells 1997: 308).

Castells concluded that in the new informational society power still rules society; it still shapes and dominates people. Yet, and this is the important point, it is no longer concentrated in institutions (the state), organisations (capitalist firms), or symbolic controllers (corporate media, churches). "*It is diffused in global networks of wealth, power, information, and images, which circulate and transmute in a system of variable geometry and dematerialized geography.*" (1997: 359; italics added)

It is exactly this diffused network character of the new global society which captures its infinitely *complex* nature. As Castells pointed out, networks are *open* structures, able to expand infinitely through shared communication codes (e.g. values or performance goals). As the new structural formation of society, they capture "a highly

[28] See again the previous footnote.

dynamic open system, susceptible to innovating without threatening its balance" (1996: 470). Consequently, they are appropriate instruments not only for a capitalist economy based on innovation, globalisation and decentralised concentration, but also constitute the "new material basis for the performance of activities throughout the social structure" (1996: 470-471).

Continuing with Castells' analysis, this open, dynamic and infinite nature of global 'Network Society' leads us to recognise that processes of social transformation in this society "go beyond the sphere of social and technical relationships of production: *they deeply affect culture and power as well*" (1996: 476; italics added). It is undoubtedly, first of all, the world of global capital and the actors buying into it (states, a global elite, etc.). It is a world which at first sight is "exclusively made of markets, networks, individuals, and strategic organizations, apparently governed by patterns of "rational expectations" (the new, influential economic theory)". It is, in fact, a world *without identity*, of individual power politics and gain beyond any borders:

> No need for identities in this new world: basic instincts, power drives, self-centred strategic calculations, and, at the macro-social level, "the clear features of a barbarian nomadic dynamic, of a Dionysian element threatening to inundate all borders and rendering international political-legal and civilization norms problematic."[29] (1997: 355)

Yet, and this is an integral aspect of Castells' analysis[30], the new 'Network Society' is a world that also "triggers its own challenges", in the form of what Castells calls communal *resistance identities* and *project identities* (1997: 359; see also 6-12). While the "(n)ew information technologies are integrating the world in global networks of instrumentality" (1996: 22), the reverse side thereof is a new 'identity politics' by different collectivities that *challenges the contemporary movement towards globalisation and cosmopolitanism, as well as the democratic principle upheld by the modern nation-state, on behalf of cultural self-expression and people's control over their lives and environment* (1997: 2). Being multiple, highly diversified in nature as they follow the specificities of each culture, and of historical sources of

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[29] Castells here quoted another writer, Alexander S. Panarin.

[30] In the three volume series referred to in footnote 26 (and of which the first two volumes are used as sources in our discussion), Volume II as a whole (i.e. *The Power of Identity*) deals with the aspect of new identity formation in the 'Network Society'.

formation of each identity, these expressions include, in Castells' identification, especially two categories. They are, firstly, the new *proactive movements* (i.e. 'project identities') such as feminism and environmentalism, whose aim is the transformation of human relationships at their most fundamental level. But they, secondly, also include a whole range of *reactive movements* (i.e. 'resistance identities'), that under the combined assault of techno-economic forces and transformative social movements[31], build communities of resistance on behalf of God, nation, ethnicity, family and locality (ibid).

Important, then, is to point out the ambivalent relation of these 'identity projects' to the new information technology. They are, and this is particularly the case with 'resistance identities', expressions of what Castells calls "*the exclusion of the excluders by the excluded*" (1997: 9; italics retained). Thus, they compensate by building defensive identities *in the terms* of the dominant institutions and ideologies, whereby they reverse the value judgement forced on them and, at the same time, reinforce the boundaries of separation (ibid). As Castells put this eloquently in communication terms:

> There seems to be a logic of excluding the excluders, of redefining the criteria for value and meaning in a world where there is shrinking room for the computer illiterate, for consumptionless groups, and for under-communicated territories. When the Net switches off the Self, the Self, individual or collective, constructs its meaning without global, instrumental reference: the process of disconnection becomes reciprocal, after the refusal by the excluded of the one-sided logic of structural domination and social exclusion. (1996: 25)

But as Castells also concluded, more often than not, new powerful technological media, such as worldwide, interactive communication networks, are used by 'resistance' and 'project identities' to sharpen their struggle and vision of a transformed society. He, in this case, pointed to international environmentalists, but also 'resistance identities' such as the Mexican *Zapatistas,* as foremost examples of

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[31] Whereas Castells views the relation between 'resistance identities' and 'project identities' in a positive light, in the sense that he sees the former as a primary source from which the latter does and will emerge (see 1997: 11-12, 357-358), he otherwise also identified 'project identities', in the form of the proactive social movements, to be a possible cause for the resistance politics of reactive movements/communities. Thus, the outgoing dynamics of proactive movements, as they seek to transform human relationships and social structures, and ultimately construct new identities, can also be seen as an important cause, in addition to the forces of economic globalisation, for the retreat of individuals and communities (cultural, religious, ethnic, etc.) into 'resistance identities'.

'alternative' actors who have come to use the Internet to challenge the dominant system on their own terms (1997: 2). In the case of the Zapatistas, they might be called "the *first information guerrilla movement*" (1997: 79; italics retained). They did not merely resist, but used the media and modern communication technology to *communicate* with the outside world, and by doing so, captured "the imagination of people and of intellectuals... [and] propelled a local, weak insurgent group to the forefront of world politics" (ibid):

> Essential in this strategy was the *Zapatistas*' use of telecommunications, videos, and of computer-mediated communication, both to diffuse their messages from Chiapas to the world... and to organize a worldwide network of solidarity groups that literally encircled the repressive intentions of the Mexican government... Extensive use of the Internet allowed the *Zapatistas* to diffuse information and their call throughout the world instantly, and to create a network of support groups which helped to produce an international public opinion movement that made it literally impossible for the Mexican government to use repression on a large scale. Images and information from and around the *Zapatistas* acted powerfully on the Mexican economy and politics. (1997: 80)[32]

A similar case in point, would, for Castells, be the environmental movement's use of the modern communication system to further their aims. Viewed by him as one of the most successful 'alternative' movements of our time (1997: 110), much of the success of this movement had come, according to Castells, from the fact that it has been able to, more than any other social force in recent history, "best adapt to the conditions of communication and mobilization in the new technological paradigm" (1997: 128).

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[32] Another example of a successful populist utilisation of the modern communication system, which has shown that "media politics does not have to be the monopoly of influential interest groups, or of established political parties" (1997: 331-332), is, for Castells, the case of the political movement, Condepa, in Bolivia since the late 1980s. Built around the leading figure of Carlos Palenque and his experience of and relative position of power in the field of modern communication, the success of this movement represent, to Castells, a primary example of the way in which the modern media system has been used to establish a significant popular base (see 1997: 328-333). As Castells made the point in short:

> ...Condepa's influence is not just a media manipulation: its themes refer to the actual suffering of people in La Paz, and its language directly communicates to the cultural and local identity of popular strata in La Paz and El Alto... However, without the power of the media, and without a perceptive communication strategy mixing entertainment radio and television with a space for public complaints, and with the building of charismatic trust between the leaders and the audience, Condepa would have been reduced to a minor role, as happened to other populist movements in Bolivia... Indeed, in 1996, Bolivians trust the media more than they trust their political representatives (1997: 331).

They have been especially successful in using the media[33] to "reach a much broader audience than their direct constituency", which has also "lent them a legitimacy higher than that of any other cause". This, however, is not only evident in the cases of global environmental activism (such as the public activism of an organisation like Greenpeace), but also stands central to environmental struggles at the local level in which TV news, radio and newspapers have been utilised "to the point that corporations and politicians often complain that it is the media rather than ecologists who are responsible for environmental mobilization" (ibid).

Castells continued by stating that environmentalists had indeed been "at the cutting edge of new communication technologies as organizing and mobilizing tools, particularly in the use of the Internet". They have, in a sophisticated way, come to utilise the Internet to coordinate actions and information across boundaries and groups (1997: 129). Yet, while belonging to the category of proactive 'identity projects', Castells pointed out how environmentalists' relation to science and technology is not less *contradictory* than in the case of 'resistance identities'. In the case of 'resistance identities', first of all, we saw how they, besides being marginalised in instances to the extent where they are totally excluded from the economic and power networks associated with the new communication technology, have in other instances also vindicated themselves in the new informational society. In Castells words, "(t)hey use informational technology for people's horizontal communication, and communal prayer, while rejecting the new idolatry of technology, and preserving transcendent values against the deconstructing logic of self-regulating computer networks" (1997: 358).

In the same, but still more intensive way, a proactive group (collectively and generally speaking) such as the environmental movement displays what Castells calls, "*an ambiguous, deep connection with science and technology*" (1997: 123; italics retained). Its ascendancy coincided "with the information technology revolution, and with the extraordinary development of biological knowledge through computer modeling, that took place in the aftermath" (ibid). Science and technology, thus, play

[33] Castells, in this regard, would speak of the symbiotic relationship between media and environmentalism, whereby the environmental movement has not only been dependent on the media for its cause, but the issues raised by environmentalists have also "provided a good terrain for the media to assume the role of the voice of the people, thus increasing their own legitimacy, and making journalists feel good about it" (1997: 128-129).

a fundamental albeit contradictory role in this movement. While criticising the domination of life by science, ecologists also "*use science to oppose science on behalf of life*" (ibid; italics added). As a movement, environmentalists largely rely "on gathering, analyzing, interpreting, and diffusing scientific information about the interaction between man-made artifacts and the environment, sometimes with a high degree of sophistication" (ibid). They respond to the imperative set by Castells for 'alternative' actors, namely to act on the culture of real virtuality that frames communication in the 'Network Society', and to *subvert this culture on behalf of alternative values* by introducing codes that emerge from their autonomous projects (1997: 361). In a nutshell:

> The advocated principle is not the negation of knowledge, but superior knowledge: the wisdom of a holistic vision, able to reach beyond piecemeal approaches and short-sighted strategies geared towards the satisfaction of basic instincts. In this sense, environmentalism aims at retaking social control over the products of the human mind before science and technology take on a life of their own, with machines finally imposing their will on us, and on nature... (1997: 123)

Thirdly, the reality of the new global informational society brings writers from the intellectual group that is discussed in this section, to emphasise the necessity of not merely conceptualising a civil society/global civil society approach to transformation, but *a civil society/global civil society approach in terms of the new information and communication dynamics that shape contemporary society.*

It is an emphasis which is, for some, based on the perception that current trends in world communication are in fact forcefully converging "towards the disempowerment of people" and are contributing "to the establishment of a new world order which is inegalitarian, exclusive and elite-oriented" (Hamelink 1994: 121). They therefore call upon all social movements and other 'alternative' actors to make the issue of media and communication an integral aspect of their agenda, notwithstanding what their first issue of concern may be (McChesney 1996: 16; see also Hamelink 1994: 147; Waterman 1996a: 25). They call upon all these actors to mobilise themselves into a global civil initiative that not only reactively challenges the world of global information capitalism, but *proactively* (see Hamelink 1994: 147) generates and compels new democratic and independent spaces through which people may assert themselves socially, culturally and politically on the basis of their access to the

resources of modern communication (see Cassani 1995: 217-218, 220-221; Hamelink 1994: 145-149; McChesney 1996: 16-20; cf. also Stangelaar 1985: 13-20)[34].

However, the emphasis on a civil society/global civil society mobilisation in terms of the new information and communications dynamics, takes on a still deeper meaning here. As other discussions suggest, it is an emphasis that is not merely born out of necessity and the disempowering nature of world communication. On the basis of what has been pointed out in the previous point, the *emancipatory potential* of the new information technology for 'alternative' actors is indeed recognised, whatever the nature of their struggle may be. It is recognised that the new communication technology potentially constitutes a medium of great opportunity for strategic mobilisation within civil society. In the words of Raymond Williams, this technology and the new system as a whole "offer opportunities for new cultural relationships, which the older systems could not". These new technologies could make "a significant improvement *in the practicability of every kind of voluntary association*: the fibers of civil society as distinct from both the market and the state" (Williams quoted in Dawson and Bellamy Foster 1996: 55; italics added).

From a somewhat different angle Peter Waterman pointed out that the new informational society can be seen as the sphere most *appropriate* to the own nature and dynamics of the new social movements. These movements *are in large part "communication internationalisms" and (as we have also seen in the second point above) are making increasing use of "computer-mediated communications"* (1996: 51; italics added). Making his point in a way that should also be taken as very valid to the value and idea emphasis in the WOMP/*Alternatives* intellectual circle discussed earlier, and this circle's search for further innovative strategic mobilisation:

> There is considerable agreement on "the central importance of knowledge and information"... in the current transformation of capitalism globally, even if the question of what the transition is to remains unclear or disputed. *The growing centrality to social processes of the "mode of information"... - of data, ideas, values, images, theories, and cultures - makes it possible and necessary for life-asserting or*

[34] Two concrete projects which are either proposed or under way in this regard, is a "People's Communication Charter", which is discussed in the writings of Cees Hamelink, and an independent global "Civil Society Development Fund" (see Cassani 1995: 215-221) that could meet the information and communications needs of civil society actors. In 7.4.2 these two projects will be more closely considered as projects through which the churches could make a meaningful contribution to the emerging new communication solidarities.

> *emancipatory movements to operate on these terrains. Here they can reveal, as Amnesty International does, what is globally concealed, or suggest, as Friends of the Earth might, new meanings for what is globally revealed...* A global information capitalism would seem to provide far more favorable terrains for emancipatory movements than those of an internationalized industrial capitalism (industry, polity, nation, battlefield). It has proven extremely difficult to radically democratize these old terrains. (1996: 50; italics added)

For Waterman, thus, information capitalism constitutes "an imminently disputable terrain" (ibid). "That this sphere is created and dominated by the logic of capital" can, according to him, not "conceal its contradictory nature: capital, capitalists, capitalisms, cannot simply control this sphere in the way they did the factory, the family, the state, the school and the gun" (Waterman, forthcoming[35]). It is "a *non-territorial* sphere, meaning one increasingly capable of that expanding growth, flexibility and democratisation that the capitalism of industry and the nation-state has promised/denied" (ibid). In this sphere it becomes possible to generate a space for the co-existence of what Waterman describes as "our networks" as opposed to "their networks" (ibid). Moreover, in this sphere the position of local actors and communities are redefined. Through the communication networks generated by this sphere, grassroots groups around the world are now suddenly enabled "*to act globally*, at the level where main problems are created" (Castells 1997: 129; italics added). Answering, thus, also what is recognised in WOMP/*Alternatives* debates as the remaining need for grassroots movements to mobilise into a more coordinated and effective coalition politics at the meso and global levels[36] - in the sense that the network model of informational society might make such a coalition possible and effective - reference can here, furthermore, be made to Waterman's notion of "multiple positions" to express the strategic position of activated 'alternative' actors in the 'Network Society':

> Any 'alternative' social movement, or related non-governmental organisation (NGO), can thus find itself in multiple positions, in local-to-global space, or at particular times. It is, for example, possible for a feminist movement, organisation or tendency (local-to-global) to be simultaneously self-isolated (within civil society, from other

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[35] An earlier draft obtained from the author, is used here as source: Waterman, P (forthcoming), Social Movements, Local Places and Global Spaces, in Gills, B (ed.), *Globalisation and the Politics of Resistance*, 135-149, London: Macmillan.

[36] See again the last paragraph on p. 177.

> feminists or women, from men) and incorporated (into reform strategies or intermediating roles promoted by capital or state). A complex, interdependent, yet uneven and unbalanced global order, requires complex, interdependent global alternatives, which the alternative movements are beginning to offer. In so far as it is globalised, moreover, contemporary capitalism promotes communication and culture to increasing pre-eminence, this providing an eminently disputable terrain for such new emancipatory movements. Cultural globalisation makes an alternative global solidarity culture both necessary and possible. The form of the new global solidarity movements is, thus, increasingly that of 'information internationalisms'. (Waterman, forthcoming)

In this chapter we have basically identified and discussed two intellectual debates that enrich David Korten's notion of fourth generation development. We have seen how these two debates converge on a number of issues: (i) their emphasis on the new grassroots and social movements as the determinants of development and a new identity politics; (ii) their emphasis on the need for such a social movement and identity politics to assimilate into a broader solidarity initiative that we may call the construction of a civil society/global civil society; (iii) their emphasis on an approach to transformation that, by implication, relies on the free flow of particular sets of ideas, values and information to achieve the desired results; (iv) their similar critical disposition to the mainstream, which can also well be taken as their similar, shared vision of an 'alternative' society.

However, we have also seen how these two debates separate on the basis that the second, in a definite sense, has come to locate the 'alternative' debate in the socio-analytic context of informational society and the actual resistance and strategic politics of 'alternative' actors in terms of the dynamics of this society. Hence our conclusion that it is this difference within the broader 'alternative' debate that should be taken very seriously in further theoretical and strategic considerations on alternative development, fourth generation development, the new social movement politics and civil society/global civil society. If this is not done, the danger may indeed be that of an ongoing intellectual effort that is neither appropriate in terms of the changed social context, the new opportunities, but also forms of injustice generated in this new context, and the value- and idea-centred approach to transformation highlighted in fourth generation/alternative development perspectives.

In this regard we may well return to Manuel Castells' analysis, specifically his distinction between two notions of civil society. In disregarding the new terms in which society is understood today (as set out in this subsection), it would seem that the 'alternative' debate rather adheres to a concept of civil society that is defined by Castells as outmoded in terms of the new social dynamics. Albeit that this may be a progressive meaning of civil society - in the Gramscian sense - which understands civil society to be formed by a series of "apparatuses (such as the churches, unions, parties, cooperatives, civic associations, etc.) constantly negotiating the position of people/citizens vis-à-vis the state", it remains that the institutions of civil society cannot be set apart from the state which it seeks to conquest on behalf of the people (1997: 8-9). "The conquest of the state by the forces of change... present in the civil society, is made possible exactly because of the continuity between civil society's institutions and the power apparatuses of the state, organized around a similar identity" (1997: 9). As Castells put it still better elsewhere in his discussion, where he pointed out the lost legitimacy of the state and its civil society counterparts in the new informational society:

> At the dawn of the Information Age, a crisis of legitimacy is voiding of meaning and function the institutions of the industrial era. Bypassed by global networks of wealth, power, and information, the modern nation-state has lost much of its sovereignty... As a result of these convergent processes, the *sources* of what I call... *legitimizing identities* are drained away. The institutions and organizations of civil society that were constructed around the democratic state, and around the social contract between capital and labor, have become, by and large, empty shells, decreasingly able to relate to people's lives and values in most societies. It is indeed a tragic irony that when most countries in the world finally fought their way to access the institutions of liberal democracy... these institutions are so distant from the structure and processes that really matter that they appear to most people as a sarcastic grimace in the new face of history. In this end of millennium, the king and the queen, the state and the civil society, are both naked, and their children-citizens are wandering around a variety of foster homes. (1997: 354, 355)

In the emergence of the new 'project identities' referred to earlier in this discussion, Castells would see the potential to reconstruct a new civil society, and eventually, a new state (1997: 356, 362). However, the constitution of these new subjects "takes a different route to the one we knew during modernity, and late modernity" (1997: 11) They do not seem to emerge from identities of the industrial era's civil society, which

is a process of disintegration, but from a development of the 'resistance identities' also discussed earlier (1997: 11, 357). Beyond this, however, they are those new proactive movements in society that, at the same time, are managing to move "out from the trenches of resistance" to build new identities that redefine their position in society "and, by so doing, seek the transformation of overall social structure" (1997: 8). They are integral actors of the new 'Network Society' which, in their networking, decentred form of organisation and intervention, are "mirroring, and counteracting, the networking logic of domination in the informational society". In this sense, they "do more than organizing activity and sharing information. *They are the actual producers, and distributors, of cultural codes*. Not only over the Net, but in their multiple forms of exchange and interaction." (1997: 362; italics retained) As their ultimate meaning are well expressed in the following quote, furthermore:

> They are the collective social actor through which individuals reach holistic meaning in their experience. In this case, *the building of identity is a project of a different life, perhaps on the basis of an oppressed identity, but expanding toward the transformation of society as the prolongation of this project of identity*, as in the above-mentioned example of a post-patriarchal society, liberating women, men, and children, through the realization of women's identity. Or, in a very different perspective, the final reconciliation of all human beings as believers, brothers and sisters, under the guidance of God's law, be it Allah or Jesus, as a result of the religious conversion of godless, anti-family, materialist societies, otherwise unable to fulfill human needs and God's design. (1997: 10; italics added)

Indeed, it would be possible to say that Castells' identification of 'project identities', that is, the new proactive social movements whose presence and participation in the new 'Network Society' are pointing to the possibility of a new (global) civil society in the making, closely resembles David Korten's notion of fourth generation development strategies, but also much of the debate on alternative development and alternatives in the intellectual circle of WOMP/*Alternatives*. It would seem that we are encountering in all cases here (which also include the other writers discussed in this subsection) a prioritisation of the *same* actors, whether they are referring to the grassroots and resistance movements highlighted in Castells' discussion and WOMP/*Alternatives* debates, or the proactive new social movements commonly highlighted.

Whereas Castells and the other writers who have been discussed in this section (6.4) are, in a fundamental way, pointing out the new socio-analytic context in which the fourth generation/alternative development/'alternative' debate is to be cast (which still lacks in this debate), it would also be possible to say that Castells' identification of a different civil society shaped by the new 'project identities' of the 'Network Society', does not have to be viewed in opposition to the 'solidarity' vision of the global civil society approach that has been set out in the previous section (6.3) (in so far as the latter approach may represent civil society actors that belong rather to Castells' category of disintegrating 'legitimising identities' of the industrial age). Let it be emphatically stated, the reality of the new 'Network Society', the actual participation of 'alternative' actors and movements in this society today, the vision of a new and global civil society, and ultimately a new people-centred world, more than ever assume the necessity and possibility of larger solidarity projects: on the local, meso and global levels of society. In this solidarity projects or *Project*, aimed at the construction of a new civil society, actors of Castells' old civil society could still play a vital role. What is required from them, however, *is to be transformed inwardly by the values and worldview that are determining the alternative dynamics in the new 'Network Society'*, not so much in the sense of Castells' 'resistance identities', but in the sense of the new 'project identities' that he has identified. We will more pertinently consider the potential contribution of one such actor, namely the churches, in the last chapter of this study.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE CHURCHES' PARTICIPATION IN FOURTH GENERATION DEVELOPMENT: PERSPECTIVES AND POSSIBILITIES[1]

7.1 Introduction

In the last three chapters of this study we explored the landscape of new strategic development meaning. Whereas we highlighted in this exploration the meaning of fourth generation strategic development action, we also focused on the concept of third generation development strategy. Thus, a meaning of fourth generation development action had unfolded in our discussion that, within an overall perspective, rather assumes the people-centred development theoretical and strategic underpinnings that guide the third generation orientation. Put differently, in this overall perspective a fourth generation development orientation fully shares the alternative societal vision of the third generation, and the emphasis on managerial, policy and other skills to realise that vision. Consequently, this orientation does not neglect the fact that in the real world of today, which is a world still ruled by governments and state-centred actors[2] in addition to the new/other dominant actors of global capitalism, another level of engagement is required that will complement the fourth generation mode. Albeit cast in terms of alternative values and an alternative theoretical understanding, this is the level of reigning sophisticated policy, managerial

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[1] This chapter draws in part on ideas which have been developed in the present writer's MA Research Paper, *Towards a New Solidarity Praxis: Critical Reflections on the Churches' Participation in World Transformation*, Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, 1997.

[2] This statement does not stand in opposition to what has been said in 6.4. Having pointed out, in terms of Manuel Castells' analysis, how power has shifted away from state institutions in the new dispensation of global information capitalism and the 'Network Society', and how the reconstruction of a new civil society should be sought with those new 'project identities' that are today representing a discontinuity with the state and the 'legitimising identities' that have constituted the 'old' civil society (given their loss of legitimacy), it would be wrong to understand by this that the institution of the state is to be disregarded as far as a contemporary 'politics of power' is concerned. Indeed, this is also not the meaning of Castells' analysis, as our reading of him on p. 197 suggests. To elaborate here on his point of view, nation-states remain "strategic actors" of "considerable influence", with the exception today that they are "playing their interests, and the interests they are supposed to represent, in a global system of interaction, in a condition of systemically shared sovereignty" (1997: 307). In this sense of reconfirmed strategic importance, *they are thus also an actor that cannot be ignored by those 'alternative' actors that are interested in the construction of a 'new' civil society/global civil society.*

and organisational application to which actors of a people-centred and alternative development must also adapt and on which they are to make an impact as well.

Thus, it follows that a fourth generation strategic development orientation does not neglect the real world of policy and managerial emphasis, which in the new world of global information capitalism seems to be emphasised more than ever. The new people-centred development world that this orientation envisions, is also not a world without management and policy-making. Rather, *it calls for counter-strategies also to be fought on the operating level of the dominant actors and institutions of today, yet, counter-strategies that will in the process contribute to the new world which the new social movements are exerting themselves for.* May we state this emphatically, *this is the same decentralised and sustainable world that is conceptualised in the third generation strategic orientation.* Essentially, *it is a new world that is at decentralised level also to be sustained and continuously shaped by the kind of theoretical and strategic input, institutional arrangements and policy processes, that determine third generation strategic development action.*

As already stated, fourth generation strategic development action requires the analytic, catalytic, articulation, technical and other skills of third generation development strategies[3]. It furthermore does not despise the use of modern technology, but recognises their emancipatory potential for achieving its goals of development and transformation[4]. Whereas fourth generation strategic activity seeks greater global penetration, in contrast to third generation strategies, it otherwise requires and applies these skills and technology in the same formal way as in third generation strategic action when dealing with the global policy-makers of development. However, it does not to a lesser extent require these skills and technology in the people-to-people interaction and conscientisation by which it is ultimately characterised. Rather, it calls on the new social movements and the organisations that articulate and support those movements (e.g. NGOs) to be more effectively organised and to engage in *more informed* conscientisation through their application and utilisation of such skills and technology.

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[3] See again 5.4.

[4] See again 6.4.

Against the background of the above summary of complementary third and fourth generation strategic development action (based on the discussion in the last three chapters), we can now shift our focus back to the churches. Having begun this study with the hypothesis that the churches (a distinct 'idea' and 'value' institution) could play a meaningful role and excel in the third generation and especially fourth generation modes of strategic development action, the question on the basis of our preceding exploration then remains: *What* should the *concrete* participation of the churches in third and fourth generation development involve? But also, what is the *nature* of the churches and theological discourse that could meaningfully participate in these modes of development, given our conclusion in this study that the development praxis of the churches rather remains stuck in what David Korten came to identify as first and second generation development strategies or approaches?

Indeed, parts of our discussion in the previous two chapters may well have suggested that we are entering an emerging *post-secular* (post-modern?) era in which the role of religion (and by implication an institution such as the churches) in development and positive transformation is beginning to be reappraised. Whereas their appraisal is not unconditional, David Korten and authors from the circle of WOMP/*Alternatives* (on the basis of the discussion especially in 6.2.2) may in this study be taken as clear examples of such a reappraisal, of what we have indicated in the introduction[5] as a growing normative social scientific movement that is also showing a new *appreciation* for the role that religion and its institutions can play towards their visions of normative change[6]. In the case of Korten and the authors from the WOMP/*Alternatives* circle, it can be noted that *their appreciation is none other but*

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[5] See again pp. 9-10.

[6] A scholarly movement characterised by its inter- and multi-disciplinary nature (which includes fields such as development studies, (humanistic) economics, future studies, environmental studies, political science, etc.), such an appreciation of religion (in addition to Korten and the writers from the WOMP/*Alternatives* circle that we have already identified) can, for instance, be traced in the writings of Kenneth Boulding (see 1968: Part III), Simon Sui-cheong Chau and Fung Kam-Kong (see 1990: 222-231), Bill Clark (see 1990: 183-188), John Cobb and Herman Daly (see 1990: chap. 20), Mawil Izzi Deen (see 1990: 189-197), O. P. Dwivedi (see 1990: 201-211), Paul Ekins (see 1992: 194-199), Ronald Engel (see 1990: 12-14), Johan Galtung (see 1996: 408-413), Roger Garaudy (see 1983: 47-60), Denis Goulet (see 1995: chap. 16), Willis Harman (see 1984: 10-11), Leilah Landim (see 1987: 31-33), David Lehmann (see 1990: chap. 3, 4 and 5), Marilyn Little (see 1995: 131-134), Kate Manzo (see 1995: 245-247; 1991: 21-25), Robert Moore (see 1990: 104-112), OECD (see 1987: 8-11), Martin Palmer (see 1990: 50-61), Susanne Hoeber Rudolph (1996: 314-318), William Ryan (see 1995: Part I and II), E. F. Schumacher (see 1993: chap. 6), S. Sivaraska (see 1990: 213-221), R. H. Tawney (see 1961: chap. 11), Bart van Steenbergen (see 1983: 140-141).

one that falls in the realm of the fourth generation development understanding. Clearly, *they are calling upon religion to play a role or roles that is of a fourth generation developmental nature*[7].

Coming back to our question above about the concrete participation of a religious institution such as the churches, we may begin to become more specific on the basis of the perspectives that we have found in the writings of Korten and the authors from the WOMP/*Alternatives* circle. In the case of Korten, we have seen how he called upon religion and the churches (which he also specifically mentioned) to play a definite *reconciliatory* role[8] (thus to excel as a distinct actor within the contemporary peace movement!). In another sense, we have seen how he also highlighted the aspect of *spiritual* development and the role which religion and the churches should play in changing and nurturing people's inner spirit and consciousness towards caring relationships and a sense of structural justice[9].

Thus, in the case of Korten, we may find an appreciation of the churches that fully takes into account *their distinctive nature as 'idea' and 'value institutions'*, which he sharply contrasted with their preoccupation with charity and so-called development projects[10]. As such, it would be possible to say that *all* seven of the key elements that Korten has prioritised as central to fourth generation development (as set out in 5.3.2), could be taken as areas to which the churches might meaningfully contribute. Besides the elements of reconciliation and spiritual development which he has highlighted as especially applicable to religion and the churches, one can well see how the churches could make crucial contributions to Korten's second and fourth element of lifestyles and the family, that is, elements or areas that have in fact always been strong points of the churches, in one way or another[11]. But also, it is possible to conceive how socially informed, ideologically critical and politically conscious churches could make meaningful contributions to Korten's remaining elements of political democratisation,

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[7] This is, for instance, clearly indicated in the quote on pp. 169-170.

[8] See again the discussion on pp. 157, 169-170.

[9] See again the entry on 'spiritual element' on pp. 158-159.

[10] See again the quotes on p. 158 and pp. 169-170.

[11] With regard to the element of lifestyles, we may recall how the conscientisation ('pedagogy') of the rich had come to be emphasised in the pragmatic debate on development in the ecumenical movement, especially in the radical account through the writings of Charles Elliot in particular. See again 3.3.2.

economic democratisation and trade and investment relations on an idea, ethical or value level[12].

Indeed, an institution such as the churches fits Korten's categories of central actors in *fourth generation* development very well[13]. Thus we can say that the churches are in essence, and at their best, *voluntary organisations* (VOs) that operate and exists on the basis of the faith and moral commitment of their members. But they can also well be conceived as *people's organisations* (POs) that are collectively run and owned by their members on the basis of shared faith and values. Moreover, in the churches the concept of *citizen volunteers* also centrally figures: integral to their mission is to prepare and send out their members to live out their faith and values *in the world.* Not the least, the churches are also no strangers to the element of *movement formation*: they have as 'idea' and 'value institutions' mobilised into different kinds of global people's movements throughout their long history (such as the ecumenical and evangelical movements in contemporary history). It can be concluded that all these 'fourth generation' attributes of the churches could under certain conditions be utilised greatly to the advantage of a fourth generation people-centred development and social movement agenda.

In the case of the writers of WOMP/*Alternatives* circle[14], their more concrete appraisal of religion also follows a direction similar to that of Korten. It is the voluntary and value-centred dynamics of religious traditions and the churches that these writers have come to view as potentially of great advantage to their own agenda of alternative values and a new world order, and in strengthening a social movement politics in various ways - material, organisational, educational and spiritual. For them, similar to Korten, there is a pertinent 'spiritual' role for religious traditions and the churches to play, but then one that takes concrete effect in terms of the new social movement values and activities.

In addition to such first steps to become more concrete, an attempt will be made in this chapter to work out a more concrete framework for the churches' participation in

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[12] This, in fact, seems to have been elements which the ecumenical development debate had aimed to address through their emphasis on the concepts of economic growth, social justice and self-reliance. See again the discussion in 2.3.2.

[13] See again 5.3.

[14] See again 6.2.2.

the realm of fourth generation development. As the discussion above might suggest, it is possible to conceptualise various modes, elements or areas of fourth generation development action, also as far as the churches are concerned. On this basis our attempt towards concretisation and specification should also not be seen as a suggestion of a complete or absolute package. It rather represents a conscious effort to conceptualise, on the basis of our exploration in this study, what we are calling *beacons* of fourth generation strategic development action - beacons that, in the broad sense in which they are formulated, reflect the concrete fourth generation meanings that we have been deriving from the formulation of Korten and the other alternative debates discussed in the previous chapter; yet, beacons that also give an account of the complementary third and fourth generation meaning that we had set out at the beginning of this chapter. In terms of the churches, whereas these beacons constitute *guidelines* predominantly towards outright or explicit fourth generation development activity, in the case of the third proposed beacon of alternative policy-making the possibility of the churches' meaningful participation as a third generation actor is also sustained (i.e. a competency level that assumes skills and knowledge which are also indispensable to meaningful fourth generation development action[15]).

Having sustained the argument in this study that the participation of the churches in meaningful development is not self-evident, as they remain ideologically and conceptually confined to charitable and project-centred modes of action, it crucially follows that third and fourth generation action can only be undertaken meaningfully by a different *kind* of church and theological underpinning. Clearly, *third and fourth generation development action put before the churches the challenge of new social scientific insight and skills, and of participating in a new solidarity praxis.* This challenge calls on the churches to adopt a new reflexive, collective, cooperative, dependent, relative and political outlook. Having already spelled out the theoretical and strategic contents of third and fourth generation development understanding, as well as the actors that are central to this understanding, we will here, in so far as the churches are concerned, once again take the ecumenical development debate as our point of departure. By way of a recapitulation of our appreciation in the introduction and first three chapters of this study, we will reflect on the ecumenical development

[15] See especially again the discussion in 5.4.

debate as a remaining incentive to theological-ecclesiastical participation in third and fourth generation strategic development action.

From this point of departure we will then move on to our discussion of the beacons of fourth (and third) generation development action. In view of this section of the discussion, we are to recall the ideal of *interdisciplinarity* and *integration* that has been set out as aim in the last two paragraphs in the introduction[16]. As we are interested here in an *extended* formulation of third and fourth generation strategic development meaning - an extended meaning that is, however, *aimed at the churches in particular* - it is inevitable that we should not only rely on a wider corpus of complementary social scientific perspectives that serve such a purpose[17], but also on perspectives from the best of the discipline of theology itself. It will become clear in the course of the discussion below how theological perspectives/discourses towards such a purpose *do* exist, outside and complementary to the foundational basis that we are finding in the ecumenical debate on development[18].

7.2 The ecumenical development debate: remaining incentive

Taking on third and fourth generation identities and roles (vis-à-vis first and second generation ones), this study should have made it clear, is by no means self-evident. It fundamentally requires that actors aspiring to participate in such modes of action are changed and capacitated by, and in relation to, particular external dynamics (i.e. new skills/knowledge/values/ideas, other actors/collectivities). Reciprocally to such external dynamics, the impact of progressive forces or elements *within* the own ranks of those actors, to start a process of redefinition of existing (traditional) practices, thinking and self-identity, is also required.

In terms of the latter internal requirements, we conclude that the ecumenical development debate, on which we had focused in the first three chapters, remains a

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[16] See again pp. 10 and 11.

[17] Given the rich meaning of third and in particular fourth generation strategic development action (as also evident from the beacons that we are identifying), it has been envisaged on pp. 10 and 11 that this wider corpus will comprise additional perspectives (beyond the exploration up to chapter six) that are not only development specific, but also political, sociological, communication and cultural specific.

[18] On p. 11 Ulrich Duchrow's perspectives on alternatives to global capitalism from a social theological point of view, the World Parliament of Religion's 'Declaration toward a Global Ethic', perspectives from the WCC debate on civil society, debates on public theology/religion, feminist theological perspectives and Jürgen Moltmann's perspective on a theological expression of joy have been mentioned as cases in point.

most important incentive to the churches' participation in third and fourth generation development action. Having concluded in 3.4 that this debate presents us with both an impasse and renewal as far as the issue of the churches' participation in development is concerned, we are firstly to remind ourselves of how this debate has come to indicate to us the remaining dichotomy between 'progressive' discourse and 'conservative' praxis (thus pointing to a discourse/debate with relative little practical impact), but also the ultimate erosion and fatigue of this debate itself.

However, these critical observations should not discard the positive contribution of this debate, as reflected in our earlier evaluations. Our analysis in chapter one has made it clear that the ecumenical development debate had posed a definite conceptual and ideological challenge to the prevailing *charity mentality* (first generation development strategies) in the churches. Important as ever also remains those writings on a theology of development which have been discussed in 2.2. Although they are more than often neglected in theological and ecclesiastical debates on development, the proclaimed "commitment to the *unqualified* solidarity of Christianity with the life problems of the modern world" (Rendtorff 1971: 86; italics added) in those writings, their perspectives of cooperation, integration, limited competence and dependence[19], must be regarded as absolutely *foundational* to meeting the above-mentioned requirements for participation in third and fourth generation development strategies.

We have concluded on the basis of the exposition in 2.3 that a development discourse of true social theoretical nature had been constructed in the ecumenical development debate[20]. Thus, not only does this discourse meet the criteria which had been set in those foundational writings mentioned in the previous paragraph, but it has done so in

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[19] The far-reaching nature of such a foundation for meaningful development involvement is particularly well illustrated when contrasted with the approach (or paradigm) of those evangelical theologians and churches identified in footnote 3 (1) in the introduction. Whereas the ecumenical development discourse, which is described in chapter two, takes on a proper social theoretical identity, one that is of a normative kind but devoid of explicit theological language (see the next paragraph in the main discussion below), the latter evangelical grouping appears in turn to vigorously defend the theological and Christian foundation of development. Thus, it can be said that the latter's aim has been to *reverse* the whole process again and convert the concept of development from its secular, Western origins to a meaning that is truly *biblical* and *Christian* (see e.g. Sine 1987: 2; The Wheaton '83 Statement in Samuel and Sudgen 1987: 255-258).

[20] See in this regard again our concluding observations at the beginning of 2.3.1 and in the fourth paragraph on p. 59.

a critical, uncompromising and normative manner that makes it an authentic exponent of an *alternative development* corpus[21]. In this regard, it could be said that an ecumenical development discourse had come to challenge mainstream development theory and practice in a way that well matches the level of third generation theoretisation described in 4.3.1. By way of further comparison, the thrust of the argument in the description of the three interrelated ecumenical concepts of economic growth, social justice and self-reliance in 2.3.2, is a *people-centred* development emphasis similar to that in third generation development theoretisation. As Richard Dickinson, in his review article in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*[22], confirmed such an observation, "the notion of people-centred development" soon became "the distinctive feature of the ecumenical understanding of development". In this understanding "real social transformation was to be measured by what happens to *people* in the social change process, while the traditional notions of development tended to emphasize more abstract economic or political objectives" (1991: 270).

Indeed, a *fourth generation* meaning could be recognised in the ecumenical development debate's people-centred emphasis. We came to see in 2.3 how this debate increasingly posed a critical ideological challenge to the meaning of mainstream development, on behalf of the poor, marginalised and oppressed. It had gone to that extreme where its emphasis on "the people" (see Dickinson 1991: 271-272), what we have come to describe as 'a discourse *from below*'[23], would take on clear *liberatory* overtones (i.e. converging with the message of the theology of liberation)[24]. Thus, development would in this sense be understood in very much the same terms as the first meaning of development in the WOMP/*Alternatives* debates spelled out in 6.2.1[25], a meaning that can also be seen as akin to Manuel Castells' notion of 'resistance identities'. It would similarly be understood that development, or the liberatory politics that takes its place, is a process determined by the people, in which *they* truly take control. Moreover, here the place/role of the churches would, similarly to that of voluntary organisations/NGOs in fourth generation strategic

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[21] See again the second paragraph on p. 61.

[22] See footnote 2 (chapter two).

[23] See again p. 60 (second paragraph).

[24] See again 2.3.2.2.

[25] See again pp. 173-178.

development action, be seen as essentially *supporting/serving* the people's emancipatory struggles[26].

Finally, in the ecumenical debate the *foundation* has been laid for a fourth generation approach to development by the churches, also in the fuller sense thereof that we have found in David Korten's exposition, the second meaning of development in WOMP/*Alternatives* debates[27] and Manuel Castells' notion of 'project identities'. Having pointed out how the critical ecumenical development discourse that was set out in chapter two can in itself be seen as an 'idea movement'[28] (a set of ideas that in a meaningful way renders specificity to the different value discourses in the fourth generation development understanding), at this point the pragmatic debate that was discussed in chapter three, is especially worth mentioning. A subsection or dimension of the wider ecumenical development debate, we have seen how an idea- and value-centred role for the churches in development was highlighted in the pragmatic debate, to the extent where the churches' authentic role in development could be seen as lying *outrightly on the level of conscientisation, of challenging reigning power and ideological formations.* A role that would first of all have in view the poor, marginalised and oppressed and the transformation of their situation, to the extent where they are the true beneficiaries and subjects of development, we saw how the pragmatic debate, especially its radical manifestation, also directs such a role to a conscientisation of the rich and powerful themselves[29]. Here development has become a question of transformed lifestyles, structures and institutions, beginning with the rich and their societies. In so far as the churches are concerned, their role would be seen as similar to that highlighted by Korten and in the WOMP/*Alternatives* circle, namely to devote themselves to the spiritual renewal and deepening on which such a comprehensive transformation depends. In addition, this would be a call for spiritual renewal and deepening that, as in the case of Korten and the WOMP/*Alternatives* circle, is far removed from the traditional notion of spirituality (within the churches). It would take (or ought to take) concrete, outward effect through the way in which people, especially the rich and powerful, review their

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[26] See again the quote on p. 51, which clearly states this principle.

[27] See again pp. 178-184.

[28] See again the final paragraph of chapter two.

[29] See again the discussion in 3.3.2.

relation to the poor, adopt alternative lifestyles and develop a new sensitivity for the need to transform unjust structures and institutions. It may be argued that such a perspective on spirituality and conscientisation should have found its logical continuation in the wider fourth generation strategic and value discourses that we had explored in this study (i.e. contrary to the state of erosion/impasse that we concluded the ecumenical development debate had reached in the mid-1980s[30]).

7.3 New beacons

7.3.1 The new social movements

> [F]irst of all we must realise that all over the world, many people have actually got together in new social, environmental and democratic movements: women's movements, homeless movements, farmers' movements, indigenous movements, environmental movements, peace movements and so on. Some have already formed international networks. They often work in close cooperation with the old social movements - workers' movements and trade union movements... Working in cooperation with social movements - as was the case with the prophets and the (peasant) farmers' movements [in the biblical tradition] - churches and communities must convince their members of the need for this political struggle on the basis of their faith. If they expressed dissent, symbolic difference and a clear identification with the social movements, churches and congregations would gain credibility, and so enjoy untold opportunities to prophetically challenge the power structures... Only when the churches participate in a double strategy, and go about it seriously, by saying "no" where necessary and offering alternatives, thus participating in the creation of social counterforces, can their "dialogues" take on a limited meaning within the strategy as a whole. (Ulrich Duchrow 1995: 281, 282-283)

Constituting perhaps the only explicit *theological* reference to the new social movements (in the sense that they are appreciated as actors of great significance which stand in an *autonomous* relation to the churches), in the above extract from Ulrich Duchrow's book, *Alternatives to Global Capitalism: Drawn from Biblical History, Designed for Political Action*, the basic argument of this study is well summarised. Thus we may propose, similarly to Duchrow, that within the political, value and idea dynamics represented by the new social movements today (a value and idea dynamics that David Korten has come to associate with fourth generation development strategies), the Christian churches could find new impetus in terms of their own quest for meaningful participation in the broad terrain of development. It is indeed here that

[30] See again 3.4.

the churches and the ecumenical development debate that we have appreciated in 7.2, could find a new *open-ended*, *normative* and *change-oriented* concept of development, one not so much determined by set definitions or meanings of development (cf. Hettne 1995: 11-16[31]), but by radical people-centred principles and global value discourses that one would assume the churches at their best, as progressive 'idea' and 'value' institutions, fully adhere to.

On the basis of such an identification of the new social movements as the basic point of departure for the churches in development, it is proposed here that Manuel Castells' notions of 'resistance identities' and 'project identities' that were highlighted in the last section (6.4) of the previous chapter (which also corresponds with Duchrow's notion of "a double strategy" in the above quote), can be taken as working concepts to give clearer structure to the churches' participation in fourth generation development strategies. To begin with, it may rightly be said that *it is on the level of resistance identities that the churches (or a particular segment of the churches) have always been stronger and have partly excelled as fourth generation actors*[32]. A statement supported by our appreciation of the ecumenical development debate above, as well as by a number of social scientific appraisals of the contribution of *liberation theology* to the concept of 'alternative' development (see Lehmann 1990: 88-147, 190-192; Little 1995: 133-134; Manzo 1995: 245-247; 1991: 21-25), someone like Richard Falk (whose appraisal for religion is reflected in 6.2.2) would meaningfully add to such appreciation through his suggestion of *three* pertinent terrains on which religion and the churches in particular have been allies of the new social movements. According to Falk, religious institutions/the churches have firstly served as *enclaves* by lending their "symbols and facilities in support of democratizing social movements of generally nonviolent character" in various contexts[33] (1987: 185-186). Secondly,

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[31] An understanding of the concept of development and development studies by Björn Hettne (ibid) is here adopted and applied.

[32] This is, namely, a mode of social movement politics that resembles the first meaning of development identified in the WOMP/*Alternatives* circle in chapter six (pp. 173-178).

[33] This reality, of the churches acting as enclaves for democratising movements, is also well recorded by Leilah Landim in the context of Latin America. In her already mentioned article on "Non-Govermental Organizations in Latin America" (see footnote 4, chapter four), she wrote that in some cases of political opposition:

> ...the Church became the main arena for the popular sectors, deprived of any political channels for expressing themselves and participating in society, for speaking out and articulating their needs. The consolidation in certain regions, during the 1970s, of the current that has been called "the Popular Church," is of particular importance. Religious sectors - both clergy and laity - who embrace a common discourse (sociological, political, theological: the Theology of Liberation) and a series of practices with

through their active support to such democratising struggles, they have also contributed to a new kind (or revival of an old kind) of *sacramental politics* by which the values of *peace* and *justice* would become the trademarks of such struggles (1987: 186-187). Thirdly, they have given expression to a new form of *feminist religion* that has become an important expression of the feminist movement, that is, particularly with regard to "(a) new language of the spirit [that] is needed, and being sought, as well as practices that accentuate nurturing and mothering, and that specify the sacred as a reflection of the feminine also" (1987: 187).

Returning to the contribution of liberation theology to *development discourse*, an appreciation of this mode of theology in an article by Marilyn Little, "The Liberation of Development", is especially worth mentioning. A scholar from the field of geography (!), Little proposed the notion of "One World Development" as working concept in her article. She pointed out that it was a concept or actual movement that articulates "a response to marginalization". Moreover, it is a concept or movement that through the two major motivators of religion and politics, has made a distinct impact in challenging the traditional economic growth model of development. This movement or concept has broken through the latter hegemonic concept of development and its consequent selective application on 'Third World' societies, by promoting/establishing the recognition "that there are no automatic leader/follower positions in the development process". It contends that "(t)he lack of human and social development in the "First World" matches if not surpasses the lack of economic development in the "Third World"" (1995: 131-132). For Little, then, the combined intellectual effort of liberation theology and multiculturalism constitute together with the movement of voluntary simplicity and the establishment of alternative trading organisations, a *third* manifestation of such a 'One World Development' concept or movement. Proclaiming that it is through this third manifestation that the 'One World Development' movement is making/has made an universal impact, as "the attempt is to change the collective body of knowledge so that it includes *all of the world's*

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specific characteristics, left a profound mark on the social movements they supported, and alongside which they worked, through "capillary action,", attending to the everyday needs of the popular sectors. At a time of closed political space, the NGOs in many countries took shape with this fundamental relationship with the Church's work: they operated under the auspices of the Church, carrying out their activities primarily alongside the pastoral work." (1987: 32)

people" (1995: 133; italics added), Little concluded with the following appreciation of liberation theology:

> In liberation theology, the two driving forces of One World Development have met and inspired millions to act upon a dream eloquently expressed by two Brazilian theologians.
>
> > Those committed to integral liberation will keep in their hearts the *little utopia* of at least one meal for everyone everyday, the *great utopia* of a society free from exploitation and organized around the participation of all and the *absolute utopia* of communion with God in a totally redeemed creation (italics retained) (Boff and Boff 1987, p. 94).
>
> Multiculturalism and liberation theology shared an intellectual philosophy. They have influenced each other and are influencing international discourse on development. Their major impact has been to challenge the concept of the ignorant and pliable aid recipient. This concept is the center of the authoritative persuasive approach in development planning. When it was combined with the basic needs approach the result was the transformation of *homo economicus* to "*homo systematicus*" (Illich 1992, p. 98). People became "cases" whose needs are "systemic requirements" which must be professionally evaluated... *Multiculturalism/liberation theology sees both history and current events as evidence that people are capable of analyzing their lives, determining choices and implementing solutions consistent with individual/group ethics*. (1995: 134; italics added)

Certainly, the message of the theology of liberation and the practices that it inspires, should remain a basic point of departure for the churches when faced with the issue of development, particularly the notion of fourth generation development. In fact, *it should be said that, based on an own theological self-understanding, there can be no other point of departure but the theology of liberation: an unconditional option for the poor, marginalised and oppressed, for the popular and grassroots movements which they represent.*

Yet, there is at this point also the need for further progression and innovation, as suggested by the consistent problem of *reconstruction* with which the churches (and other actors) are faced in contexts where liberation and a political platform for democracy have been achieved, but also by the striving to give shape to and promote those kinds of 'resistance identities' that Castells came to view as sources of the new 'project identity' constructions (see 1997: 356-362)[34]. In the words of the South

[34] See again the quote on p. 207.

African theologian, Charles Villa-Vicencio, who appropriately captured the challenge facing the churches here:

> Winds of change are blowing across large sections of the globe, with the political crises in Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union and South Africa presenting a new challenge for theology. Hitherto the task of liberation theologians has essentially been to say 'No' to all forms of oppression. The prophetic 'No' must, of course, continue to be part of a liberating theology. As the enduring struggle for democracy in some parts of the world begins to manifest itself in differing degrees of success, however, so the prophetic task of the church must include a thoughtful and creative 'Yes' to options for political and social renewal. (1992: 1)

Thus, the quest is here for 'resistance identities' that *anticipate, if not display, to a greater extent the qualities of Castells' 'project identities'*. In view of this recognition, we may well remain within the sphere of liberation theology and propose as point of departure what has come to be known in particular in Latin America liberation theology as the *las Comunidades Eclesiales de Base* (CEBs), the Ecclesial Base Communities. Based on the description in an *Alternatives* article by Pablo Richard (which adds to the religious appraisal set out in 6.2.2), through this ecclesiastical structure one may see the churches giving authentic expression to David Korten's notion of *people's organisations* described in 5.3.1.2. Consequently, through the CEB model the churches become an extended *community*, built on what Richard pointed out as "a *base*, a neighborhood, hamlet, school, ethnic community, social movement" (1988: 359).

An expression of the "Popular Church", or "Church of the Poor" (ibid), Richard furthermore pointed out that "(a) key concept to understanding the CEB... [was] that of "participation."" (1988: 368). In the CEB the traditionally marginalised and oppressed, "the poor, the *campesinos*, the laborers, the indigenous people, the blacks, the women", are given opportunity to participate. It is the place where they can begin to think, to speak and to organise their actions. In the CEB, *creative* participation that accommodates the social totality of the people becomes possible: they "participate by creating a new language, a new symbology, a new thought, within the CEB", which "is done from their own social, political, and above all, cultural situation" (ibid).

> (T)he Church, especially through the grassroots communities, presents itself as *a place of creativity and life and popular participation.* The CEB in this sense becomes a *formative school for men and women* who are *creative subjects*, who are *creative leaders*, and *responsible citizens*, who are in solidarity with the majority of the oppressed people. (1988: 369; italics retained)

Richard concluded that in Latin America the CEB was "thus part of what has been called the "irruption of the poor"...: a profound popular movement, an "awakening of the masses", an awakening of the peoples and cultures which have been secularly oppressed, an increasingly significant participation of the women in society" (ibid). As such, the CEB embodies "a new and authentic *democractic movement*" (italics retained) in this society, not only in the sense that it is the result of this movement, but also to a large extent the *cause* of it (1988: 369-370). "It *is* the power of the people which manifests itself in the economic, social, political, cultural and also religious life." (1988: 369; italics added)

Yet, it is in our opinion in Ulrich Duchrow's above-mentioned book (*Alternatives to Global Capitalism*) that the CEB model, as an expression of the 'project' element in 'resistance identities', is still taken to a further level. Beyond political rhetoric, in the penultimate chapter of this book Duchrow challenged the churches to actively participate in the creation of a new *life-sustaining* economy. Based on the principles of the cooperative, people's participation, creativity and ownership, and ecological sustainability, and given clearer direction by existing examples, the vision of a future life-sustaining economy called, according to Duchrow, for experiments and enterprises in the following alternative *micro-economic* areas: (i) *Alternative companies and company networks*[35], (ii) *Alternative technologies*, (iii) *Alternative land use*, (iv) *Alternative micro-financial systems*[36], (v) *Alternative trade* (see 1995: 235-268). To this he would add the personal and communal commitment to an *alternative consumption* pattern and a *fairer distribution of income* (see 1995: 268-274), that is, underlying value practices of the new economic system and the above-mentioned enterprises.

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[35] Here Duchrow (1995: 254) pointed, amongst others, to the example of the Mondragon network of cooperatives in Spain, an initiative that was started by a priest (!).

[36] The famous Grameen Bank in Bangladesh would here be upheld as example by Duchrow (1995: 261-262).

Thus, in Duchrow's case, the emphasis has clearly shifted to the *socio-economic* level. As far as the churches are concerned, while they were still some way from a large-scale contribution to the above-mentioned alternative practices[37], he otherwise pointed to "a broad diversity" of church *base communities* all over the world and in various parts of Europe[38] fitting the latter alternative category. This time from a more pertinent *European* point of departure, he pointed out that examples of church base communities acting as "germ cells" (see 1995: 252) of the new life-sustaining economy envisioned, indeed *exist*.

As prototype Duchrow upheld the example of "La Poudrière", a community or collection of five interrelated communities of over 100 people living in and around contemporary Brussels. Starting off as a group of homeless and unemployed people who got together to work on all kinds of waste from affluent society, they are a group of people (community) that has grown in sophistication and self-sufficiency on the basis of their initial recycling efforts: selling repaired goods to other poor people; running a removal firm; renovating an old brewery and factory for their recycling activities, vehicle repairs and all kinds of manual jobs; renovating parts of the works premises for accommodation; and producing most of their food on their own farm (1995: 246).

For Duchrow, then, this group of five communities, living in the city and the country, could be seen as "an autonomous cell of poor people for the poor in a totalitarian global economic system". They have come to live "a life in community which is impressive in its wholeness, and marked by joy and healing", a new beginning for many (1995: 247). They express a new aesthetics of art, play and togetherness, and live according to clear communal goals. Importantly, they also have a clear *religious*

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[37] However, examples of ecclesiastical participation could, according to Duchrow, be found in some of the identified alternative practices, such as the Development Commission of the WCC's (CCPD's) experimental study in the area of alternative technologies in the 1970s and 1980s (1995: 255), churches in Germany's participation in alternative trade through the political movement "Aktion Dritte Welt Handel" (1995: 267), and churches in Germany's attempts towards fairer income distribution through the Berlin-Brandenburg initiative "PfarrerInnengehalt - Ökumenisches Teilen" and the Baden initiative "Soldarischer Lohn - Ökumenisches Teilen" (1995: 272).

[38] Duchrow's list of specific European examples includes the Sisters of Grandchamp in Switzerland, the Brothers of Taizé in France and various examples in Germany: the Christian communities in Wulfshagenerhütten, Wethen, Imshausen, the Mennonite community in Bammental, the traditional Hutterer brotherhood in the Eifel. He furthermore referred to the European Collective of Christian Base Communities, which has its small head office in Holland (1995: 248).

base, but one that rather enhances the communal aspect and the value of equality[39]. *Their religiousness is rather a contributing factor in softening their 'resistance identity', as it emphasises voluntariness and an openness to outsiders.* As captured in the following description by Duchrow of this community:

> In front of the large kitchen there is a big terrace on the garage roof, so that children can play there in sight of their parents. Meals take place around one or two large tables, made from timber from the farm. In the house of the first community there are five artistic stained glass windows over the tables in the dining room. They depict the five *goals* of the community: presence, friendship, justice, utopia and hope, and self-discipline... Besides its stated goals, the community tried to define the *means* by which these goals could be achieved: work; a shared life and communal use of goods; a simple lifestyle; trust in others and in the goals... simple resources, available to everyone... (N)o-one is excluded, be it for reasons of their past, class background, religion, situation or job training.
>
> In such cases, there is no ethnic exclusiveness, no masters and no slaves, and no dominance of men over women. Everyone is involved in the decision-making process, everyone receives the same financial allowance, and everyone is free to go on the main annual holiday excursion and to participate in cultural events. A small group celebrate Mass every morning, a larger group every Sunday and everybody joins in the periodic celebrations. The houses are always open to guests - the modern-day equivalent of the Pauline messianic communities, as are monasteries. (1995: 248)

In a last section of the chapter under discussion Duchrow further enhanced the 'project' element by emphasising the necessity of *networking*. He emphasised that, due to the enormous pressure applied by the current mainstream system, individual or isolated alternative groups had "practically no chance of survival" (1995: 274). Again, the simplest form, and hardest for the system to get hold of, are what he called "reciprocal visits" or networking. As expressed by the following recent initiatives, including an initiative by the WCC:

> Base groups working towards an alternative economy and democratic self-organisation visit one another, exchange information, support each other, strengthen each other through positive stimuli, and form loosely - or more tightly - organised networks: ecumenical networks, solidarity networks of all types, and research networks. This is happening at all levels: first locally and then at a national and European level, with

[39] Elsewhere in the discussion Duchrow pointed out how the religiously open character of the "La Poudrière" community goes to the extent where "(a)ll its members, whether they are Christians, Muslims, Buddhists or atheists, are independent and equal and participate in the fully democratic process of shaping their economy for life" (1995: 277).

> countries always split into clear defined regions. During the UNCED in Rio in 1992, a large meeting of NGOs took place. In June 1993, the World Council of Churches hosted an international meeting of those networks which had carried out programmes of action marking "500 years of oppression and resistance". The theme of the meeting was that of the Asian networks (People's Plan 21): Alliances of Hope. There are innumerable examples, in many diverse forms, of such alliances. What unites them is a concept of a just, peaceful and environmentally friendly co-existence. (1995: 275)

However, Duchrow also cautioned against complacency. According to him, existing alliances are not to be idealised, as they are often weak and fragile in the light of financial constraints, rivalries and personality clashes that develop, the absence of better organisational facilities that leaves too much in the hands of too few people. It remains easier for single-issue groups to network with each other than with groups dealings with different (but interrelated) issues (ibid).

Despite such difficulties to construct larger networking relationships, it also remains that economic transformation (in the alternative, people-centred sense) cannot be achieved "by an 'economic policy from below' alone" (1995: 277). Stipulated as a basic assumption by Duchrow: grassroots initiatives are indeed to be seen as "seeds of a new economic policy at the micro-level"; yet, *they can change general economic conditions only if they evoke change at the macro level.* On the basis of this basic condition the *networking* of initiatives among small-scale alternatives themselves, and between themselves and institutions that in principle might be independent of capital forces (e.g. trade unions and churches), was viewed by him as "*(t)he bridge between rejecting unjust global mechanisms and setting up small-scale alternatives, on the one hand, and the necessary political strategies [on the macro level], on the other*" (ibid; italics added). In short, without such a bridge, the small-scale alternatives on the ground would lose its meaning in terms of the larger whole.

* * * * *

On the level of praxis, it can be said that the discussion up to this point in the present subsection (7.3.1) pertains mostly to the *local church's* participation in fourth generation development. Again, as Duchrow has pointed out to us, this does and should not neglect the factor of networking and cooperation at local and even wider levels among single churches or congregations, between such churches/congregations

and broader communities/people's movements/other actors. In line with the concept of 'resistance identities' that has been proposed, which consistently aims to move closer to the meaning of 'project identities', we can say that the discussion has come to challenge local churches/congregations and the larger networks in which they might be involved, to be more than *voluntary organisations* (to draw here on an earlier fourth generation concept[40]) that act as enclaves and voices *for* the democratic and resistance struggles of the poor and oppressed (although, it should be qualified, such a role remains fully valid, necessary and meaningful in particular contexts). Inspired by the churches' own message of liberation theology (which as a *message* has universal significance[41]) and the base model (CEB) that has become the practical expression of this message, the discussion has challenged the churches/congregations and their networks to become *people's organisations* (to again draw on an earlier fourth generation concept[42]) that act as the base *of* people's, especially the marginalised, poor and oppressed's strive for political, social, cultural and, we should emphasise, *economic* emancipation. It depicts the image of the local church/congregation as extended community, as the springboard or base of *people's* renewal, in the context of authentic participatory and democratic values. It depicts the local church/congregation *as new community engaging in various new initiatives*: spiritual, social, cultural, political and economic (the latter thus also denoting to the churches a new area of specialisation to be taken up by them). In contrast to first and second generation development strategies, it is not the church/congregation that goes out to render some project service *for* the people. Instead, it is the church/congregation constituting the *constant base* from where people engage in a process of comprehensive and concrete renewal, which, in line with third and fourth generation development principles, ought to have sustainable, systemic, escalating and permanent effect within the local and regional community at large[43].

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[40] See again 5.3.1.1.

[41] See again the quote from Marilyn Little's article on pp. 222.

[42] We have already applied this concept in the discussion of Pablo Richard's perspective on the CEB model on p. 223. See again 5.3.1.2.

[43] (1) In terms of the complementary third and fourth generation meaning that is sustained in this study (see especially the discussion in 5.4 and at the beginning of this chapter (7.1)), the principles and policy framework of the people-centred development agenda spelled out in chapter 4 (see especially 4.3.1) and the concept of essential or large-scale community services spelled out in 5.4 (see pp. 164, 167-168), are assumed here.

However, this can only partially be the social movement perspective that challenges the churches towards a meaningful participation in fourth generation development activity. This mode of development activity, as the exploration in this study has made it clear, implies networking and communication, a 'politics of ideas', in the widest sense possible. Beginning with Korten's perspective that was set out in chapter five, this mode of activity aspires to a people-to-people interaction going beyond local and regional initiatives. It is interested in a *global* people's movement that will be the synthesising force of the various contemporary *transnational* social movements. It seeks value, structural and policy transformation in areas that has *universal* application. It is interested in the *global* citizen, in persons whose immediate acting and thinking relate to the larger reality of global values, survival, responsibility and transformation. In the extended meaning that we found in the WOMP/*Alternatives* and other complementary debates in chapter six, fourth generation development activity goes beyond local democratic discourses and practices to focus on wider political discourses of *global* governance and structural transformation, on the question of a new *world order* defined by the new *transnational* social movement values. In the light of this project (i.e. the creation of a new world order), it goes beyond a social movements approach and emphasises a broader and more complex (global) *civil society* approach that draws on a diverse range of actors. Its orientation is ultimately the new *informational* or '*Network Society*' and the system of *world communication* to realise its project of a new and global civil society *solidarity*. The working concept is here Manuel Castells' notion of '*project identities*', which anew takes as its point of departure the new transnational (*proactive*) social movements, those actors that should determine the *identity* of the new civil society solidarity.

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(2) Here the concept of Mondragon in Spain's Basque Country serves as a concrete illustration. Being an initiative that *started off with a priest*, it has had the multiple effect that we are speaking of. As Duchrow described the widening dynamics of this initiative:

> In 1941 the priest Don José Maria Arizmendiarrieta, with the help of a population still recovering from the effects of the civil war, began building a technical college. The first self-managed cooperatives soon followed in the Leniz valley. A credit cooperative was set up to fund the venture. By 1986, the system of cooperatives in the region consisted of: 103 industrial cooperatives (with high quality research centres), 8 agricultural cooperatives, 4 service cooperatives (including medical care), 1 consumer cooperative, 17 housing cooperatives, and 46 education cooperatives with, in total, around 20 000 working members. All these workers and their families see themselves not only as owners but also as co-responsible creators of this continuously expanding enterprise, in which economic (wealth creating) and social components are integrated. (1995: 254)

Against the background of such a formulation of an extended fourth generation strategic development action, the document, *Declaration toward a Global Ethic*, becomes a meaningful case study to assess amongst the different religions, the churches' progression towards the kind of fourth generation activity indicated here. Characterised by a strong Christian influence[44], in this document, which was endorsed at the 1993 meeting of the Parliament of the World's Religions by 6500 representatives (Küng and Kuschel 1993: 8), a noticeable commitment to and recognition of the need for a *global ethic*, a binding values construct, by a substantial and widely representative group from the world's religions may be found[45].

It can be noted how the declaration departs from the basic presupposition that a new global order cannot be achieved without a global ethic, without "a minimal **fundamental consensus** concerning binding *values*, irrevocable *standards*, and fundamental *moral attitudes*" (Parliament 1993: 18; emphasis in bold retained). While this does not imply forsaking religious plurality (Parliament 1993: 21), the declaration, however, identifies the need for a new recognition of fundamental *interdependence*, "practising a culture of solidarity and relatedness" (Parliament 1993: 15). Again, it becomes clear in the document that such openness cannot be confined merely to the different religions. It implies a *wider openness* on the basis of a sense of *humility* that the world's religions are not capable of solving the wide-scale and complex problems facing the world. At the same time, religion's contribution is to be regarded as indispensable, in a concrete, *spiritual* sense. The document states:

> We know that religions cannot solve the environmental, economic, political, and social problems of Earth. However, they can provide what obviously cannot be attained by economic plans, political programmes or legal regulations alone: **a change** in the inner orientation, the whole mentality, **the 'hearts' of people**, and a conversion from a false path to a new orientation for life. Humankind urgently needs social and ecological reforms, but it needs **spiritual renewal** just as urgently. As religious or spiritual

[44] The project leader and initial draftsperson of the declaration has been the distinguished Christian theologian, Hans Küng (on the historical origins of the declaration, see Küng (1993: 43-73)). One may furthermore point to the substantial group of Christian religious leaders that signed the declaration (see Parliament 1993: 37-38), as well as the continuing scholarly interest by Christian theologians in the project (as for instance evident in the 1996 publication edited by Küng, *Yes to a Global Ethic*. New York: Continuum).

[45] The declaration has been signed by such significant people as the Dalai Lama, the Cardinal of Chicago, the Vatican representative, the representative of the World Council of Churches, the General Secretary of the World Conference of Religions for Peace, the General Administrator of the International Baha'i Community, the spiritual head of the Sikhs in Amritsar, a president of the Lutheran World Alliance, the patriarch of Cambodian Buddhism, a leading rabbi and an Arab sheikh (Küng 1993: 72).

> persons we commit ourselves to this task. The spiritual powers of the religions can offer a fundamental sense of trust, a ground of meaning, ultimate standards, and a spiritual home. (Parliament 1993: 22; emphasis in bold retained).

A scrutiny of the document makes it clear, however, that 'spiritual' is nowhere understood in a mystical or abstract sense. It is a kind of spirituality that is fundamentally *relational*, which orientates the human consciousness to a new way of relating to other beings. It wants to inscribe in the human consciousness a profound *respect* for *all* life, human and non-human beings and entities. On the human side it means bringing about a new cast of mind that recognises the "inalienable and untouchable dignity" of every human being, "without distinction of age, sex, race, skin colour, physical or mental ability, language, religion, political view, or national or social origin" (Parliament 1993: 23). Moreover, it is a kind of spirituality that also requires the creation of a new sensibility for caring, protecting and preserving animal and plant life, a new sense of *planetary care*, "especially with a view to future generations - for Earth and the cosmos, for the air, water, and soil" (Parliament 1993: 26).

Such function towards inner orientation or transformation is summarised at a number of places in the declaration, which also anticipates our fourth beacon of '*soft culture*' below in which religion's contribution to softer and gentler approaches to life is emphasised. The declaration concludes that the world's religions are faced with the following challenges to give expression to a new ethos, the beginning and foundation of an alternative society:

- to develop *a concerning and helpful spirit* towards others and a *spirit of tolerance and respect* for every other person or group - racial, ethnic or religious (Parliament 1993: 26);
- to develop a *spirit of compassion* with those who suffer, with special care for children, the aged, the poor, the disabled, refugees, and the lonely;
- to cultivate *mutual respect and consideration*, in order to obtain a reasonable balance of interests, instead of thinking only of unlimited power and unavoidable competitive struggles;

- to value a *sense of moderation and modesty* instead of an unquenchable greed for money, prestige and consumption (Parliament 1993: 29);
- to cultivate a *spirit of truthfulness* in all relationships, instead of dishonesty, dissembling and opportunism (Parliament 1993: 32);
- to create a *sensibility for mutual respect, partnership and understanding* in personal (sexual) and familial relationships, instead of patriarchal domination and degradation;
- to create a *spirit of mutual concern, tolerance, readiness for reconciliation, and love*, instead of any form of possessive lust or sexual misuse (Parliament 1993: 34).

In the *Declaration toward a Global Ethic*, furthermore, perspective and orientation on religion's contribution to a global ethic is ultimately to be found in the so-called 'Golden Rule', *that* particular principle shared by many religious and ethical traditions and positively expressed in the words: *What you wish done to yourself, do to others.* The declaration determines that this rule or principle has to become "the irrevocable, unconditional norm for all areas of life, for families and communities, for races, nations and religions" (Parliament 1993: 24). It is further spelled out and concretised by four broad, *ancient imperatives* for human behaviour that are found in most of the religions of the world, and which are to constitute the irrevocable directives of a new global ethos, a new society at large (ibid). Hans Küng, in a recent essay, indicated how these ancient imperatives had been contextualised in the declaration to constitute the basic framework for thinking and action:

(i) On the basis of the commandment or directive, 'You shall not kill': the commitment to a *culture of non-violence and reverence for all life.*

(ii) on the basis of the commandment or directive, 'You shall not steal': the commitment to a *culture of solidarity and to a just economic order*;

(iii) on the basis of the commandment or directive, 'You shall not lie': the commitment to a *culture of tolerance and a life of truthfulness*;

(iv) on the basis of the commandment or directive, 'You shall not engage in fornication': the commitment to a *culture of equality and to the partnership of man and woman* (1996: 278; see Parliament 1993: Part III).

Hence, we may begin to ask on the basis of this review, is it not in this declaration that we are finding much of what is asked from religion in the fourth generation realm? Is it not in this declaration that we are encountering the kind of spiritual contribution David Korten, for instance, is asking of religion and the churches?[46] Is it not in this declaration that we are finding religion's clear commitment to play the reconciliatory role that Korten is asking from them, which in the first place begins with a reconciliation among the different religions *themselves* and making the message of love, brotherhood and reconciliation a common project (based on their own reconciliation)?[47] Is it not in this declaration that we are encountering the kind of spiritual sensitivity and renewal that authors from the WOMP/*Alternatives* circle are speaking of, a spirituality that serves as the fertile soil for a new social movement consciousness and activity and that allows for the recovery of religious tolerance that one of the writers has particularly emphasised?[48] Do we not have here a clear example of *transformed identity*, of Manuel Castells' notion of 'project identities' which he himself substantiates with the example of religious reconciliation and a new sense of religiousness?[49]

As a positive confirmation of the above questions, we should conclude with others that the "declaration toward a "global ethos"... can serve as a pointer toward the new consciousness of human values that will be required" to achieve a more sustainable and humane world (Raiser 1996: 4). It signifies a new "*ecumenical understanding* between world religions" (Küng 1996: 277; italics added), a "sign of hope for the future of religions and the peace of the world" (Küng 1993: 73), "a sign of hope that a global change of consciousness is possible" (Küng 1996a: 3). As Küng furthermore pointed out the direct relation that exists between religion, a global ethic and world peace:

> With this "global ethic", the representatives of all the great world religions did not intend to establish a new world ideology or any unified world religion beyond all existing religions, and they certainly did not intend to establish the predominance of any one religion over the others. Instead, with this "global ethic" they wanted to bring to expression an already existing general consensus regarding binding values, fixed

[46] See again the entry on 'spiritual development' on pp. 158-159.

[47] See again the end of chapter five.

[48] See again 6.2.2.

[49] See again the quote on p. 207.

> standards, and basic personal attitudes. For they were borne by the conviction that there will be no new world order without a global ethic. And without a global ethic, there will be no world peace. (1996: 277)

With regard to the churches in particular, we may conclude that by making the declaration their serious concern, by adopting it as a project of their own, they could come closer to fulfilling a fourth generation development role than through all their charity and so-called community development projects. Here they may excel *on the basis of their true expertise*. Here they may come a step closer to the world of new ideas, values and relationships that the new transnational social movements at their best are also exerting themselves for. Here it becomes possible for local churches to fully participate in a *global* project, to conscientise the kind of global citizen asked for in fourth generation strategic development action.

Yet, it must at the same time be concluded that the declaration by no means represent a fully-fledged fourth generation strategic development agenda. As point of reservation it must be stated that the declaration could easily remain within a vacuum, devoid of clear *social and political meaning or strategy*. Directly related to this point, fourth generation development action challenges the churches to go beyond the *interreligious* solidarity that the declaration essentially represents. It challenges the churches' (and the other religions') ethical agenda to take ground in the more specific discourses and strategic activities of the new social movements, to be integrated into a wider social movement and civil society politics for the *cross-fertilisation* of that agenda and the political and social praxis of the new social movements. In line with the declaration's admission that it cannot solve the world's problems, it asks of the churches (and other religions) to manifest this concretely by engaging in wider solidarities.

What we are trying to argue here, is well reflected in Richard's Falk's (*Alternatives*) article on religion and politics in the contexts of the new social movements when he stated that it was "*not sensible to place our trust in any appeal that does not concretely and courageously respond to the actuality of suffering (past, present and future) in our world*" (1988: 390; italics added). For a new postmodern religious unfolding to succeed, Falk stated as the basic premise of his argument that it would "both have to clear a *political path* (to deal adequately with resources, relations among

societies, group identity, human and nonhuman needs and aspirations) and facilitate an appropriate religious awakening (the release of spiritual energy associated with this readjustment of role and mission)" (1988: 393). But significantly, elsewhere in his article he also seems to have reversed the order when he claimed that the new, emerging religious reorientation of our time (which is grounded in the earth and is richly relational) was naturally leading to a *political reorientation* (1988: 388). It is a case where the religious dimension *dissolves in* the new social movement politics:

> The new religious sensibility endows all of nature with a scared, privileged status. The political implications are acknowledged, and lead to new forms of struggle in which modernist centralism and violence is under assault from a variety of postmodernist sources. It becomes worth dying for the sake of dolphins, whales, perhaps even on behalf of rivers, mountains, and forests. (1988: 389)

This point on political action is also clearly made by Ulrich Duchrow in the last chapter of his above-mentioned book. In this chapter, Duchrow pointed out that he favours a *double strategy*, which beyond the construction of small-scale alternatives (as pointed out earlier) includes "political intervention" (1995: 279). For Duchrow, as captured in the quote with which we began this subsection[50], political intervention relates here specifically to the *new social movements* and his statement that the churches' own "dialogues" can only take on a limited meaning within the larger strategic dynamics represented by the new social movements (1995: 283). As a clear transnational or global meaning is implied here, the churches are, according to Duchrow, challenged to actively engage in the *international networks* and *alliances* that are made up by the new (transnational) social movements first of all, as well as like-minded actors such as the old social movements (workers' movements and trade unions) and political parties (e.g. the Greens, democratic socialists, etc.) (1995: 281).

Thus, Duchrow's challenge to the churches is a clear *outward-going* involvement, one that very much resembles the transnational or global *civil society solidarity* of the fourth generation strategic development framework. It is to participate with the other actors of this solidarity in the grand 'identity project' of working for a new economic and political dispensation, what he calls a *socio-ecological economic democratic*

[50] See p. 219.

alternative to capitalism[51]. In terms of concrete strategic action, it is to work with the other actors of this solidarity for alternatives "to the current world economic and financial (dis)order" (1995: 288). From the point of view of the churches, they are challenged here to *a new terrain of knowledge and creative thinking*, the world of those international economic and political institutions that directly influence the outcome of development policy on a global scale. Following Duchrow, for the churches this challenge means to exert themselves in the larger solidarity praxis for transformation in four areas:

(i) Transformation of the *United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions* (IMF, World Bank, GATT) to that point where the BW institutions will be integrated into the UN system on the basis of more democratic, pluralistic and universal principles (see 1995: 288-294).

(ii) Ending the *debt* that Southern nations own to the North, which will amongst others lead to the implementation of structural adjustment "on a fundamentally different development model, i.e. an approach based on people and the environment, not on financial and economic growth alone" (see 1995: 294-297).

(iii) Combatting *capital and tax flight* and all economic crime, that will lead to "new international regulatory and control systems, with the governments of the richest industrial nations taking the lead" (see 1995: 298-300).

(iv) Bringing the behaviour of *transnational corporations* (TNCs) under control, monitoring their activities on a constant regulatory basis, and binding them to new social, environmental and economic principles (see 1995: 300-301).

As clearly implied in the last part of Duchrow's discussion, participating in solidarity strategies for global change are, however, not to be seen as restricted to churches in their larger formations (such as regional and national councils of churches, the WCC). Thus it can be said that in his perspective the double slogan, 'Think globally, act loc-

[51] As indicated by Duchrow (1995: 283, 288), he in this regard follows an intellectual stream represented by new/humanistic economic thinkers such as W. Kessler (Germany), W. Hoogendijk (Holland), P. Ekins and J. Robertson (Britain), H. Daly and J. Cobb jr. (USA), as well as by a number of reports and studies on the topic of a global restructuring of the political economy, such as: the UNDP *Human Development Report*, the 'treaties' emanating from the conference of NGOs at the time if the UNCED Rio Summit in 1992; the study commissioned by the EC Commissions' Fast Programme, *Towards a New Bretton Woods* (ed. S. Holland), the study by the Transnational Institute/Amsterdam, *Beyond Bretton Woods. Alternatives to the Global Order* (ed. J. Cavanagh).

ally; think locally, act globally' (see Waterman, forthcoming), is equally applicable. For Duchrow it would be vital that the churches engage in larger coalition and networking strategies with larger civil society at national, continental and global levels (see 1995: 304-311). Yet, he pointed out that action for global change could just as much be seen as the terrain of the churches at the local level (see 1995: 302-304), as the relevant "place to link small-scale alternatives and political strategies" (1995: 304). At the local level large-scale processes of pauperisation, exclusion and destruction are most noticeable (1995: 301). Here the new civil society solidarity and alliance with the new social movements ought to begin for the churches, ought to be a manifestation or duplication of the global solidarity dynamics, and ought to ripple outwards in ever-broadening linkages and networking initiatives (see 1995: 303).

In conclusion, we can find amongst those already mentioned more recent reflections on civil society within the ecumenical movement/WCC[52], a further meaningful articulation of our present argumentation - particularly in an article by Israel Batista. Having in the second part of this subsection moved from a perspective that appreciates the *Declaration toward a Global Ethic* as partly an expression of a fourth generation mode of development involvement, to perspectives (by Richard Falk and Ulrich Duchrow) that spell out more specifically the implications of the new social movements and a new civil society solidarity for the churches' strategic development involvement, Batista ended his discussion by identifying four *challenges* which a civil society "paradigm" poses to the ecumenical churches. Constituting a perspective on remaining challenges that well fills in our argument on the limitation of a project such as the one on a 'global ethic', but also on challenges that *generally* face the churches in their endeavour towards a fourth generation development involvement (in the sense of Castells' 'project identities'), Batista concluded that:

(i) *Civil society (we could add fourth generation development strategies), while opening a new world of opportunity for them, challenged the churches with someone else's agenda.* It (i.e. civil society) is/was not invented with the churches, but is/was born in the midst of people's struggles and has been worked on by many and in different contexts. It has, therefore, become vital for the churches to work *with oth-*

[52] See again points (2) and (3) of footnote 1 in chapter four.

ers' agendas and to avoid hegemonising processes and programmes. In all, the churches are challenged here to *another kind* of involvement, one that is not to be seen as less important (than former modes of involvement): *acting as facilitator, enabler and catalyst of others' experiences*, which in turn would have a far-reaching influence on the nature, function and contents of the churches' programmes (1994: 19).

(ii) *Civil society (we could add fourth generation development strategies), challenged the churches to fully engage in local and global realities.* Based on the realisation that small-scale schemes and micro-projects "cannot ignore the imposed character of global systems", the churches are challenged to "(r)esolving the tensions between local and global realities", to engage in an agenda of a global civil society working to transform the global systems of power:

> The neo-liberal proposal of decentralizing state and civil society risks reducing global policies to the care of vulnerable groups with no political impact for transformation. Similarly, no new alternative or experience can dispense with the need for changes and transformation in the dominant global system. "The world needs a new vision of global cooperation for the next century," the United Nations Development Programme has said[53]. (ibid)

(iii) *Civil society (we could add fourth generation development strategies), challenged the churches to engage themselves with the whole phenomenon of NGOs and social movements.* Being central actors of contemporary civil society working for development and transformation, the churches (as co-actors of civil society) are challenged to facilitate critical consultation on their nature and activities (i.e. of NGOs and social movements). Particularly with regard to the nature and work of NGOs, consultation (to which the churches could contribute) is necessary on the following matters: on questions such as naming everyone NGOs, including churches and ecumenical movements; on the attempts to replace people's movements by NGOs; on NGOs as subsidiaries of the state and implementors of readjustment policies; on the role of NGOs as facilitators of "ideological readjustment" (ibid).

(iv) *Civil society (we could add fourth generation development strategies) challenged the churches to exert themselves for a new international order.* On the basis of what should be their profound dissatisfaction with the transnationalisation and gross

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[53] *UN Human Development Report 1992*, p. 10.

concentration of power under contemporary capitalism, the churches are challenged to critically self-examine their own position in the international system (at the hands of an organisation such as the WCC, for instance). They should seriously reflect on what it means to be an international organisation, in relation to systematically structured ones (such as the World bank, IMF, etc.) as well as international voluntary organisations (such as Red Cross, Amnesty International, etc.). They are to reflect on the ways through which they can contribute to the promotion of international civil society organisations (1994: 19-20).

7.3.2 The new communication solidarities

> Regardless of what a progressive group's first issue of importance is, its second issue should be media and communication. This applies to all social movements. (Robert McChesney 1996: 16)
>
> (T)he power of the new movements, locally, nationally, and internationally, lies rather in their new ideas, values, and organizational principles - the latter revealing at least an implicit understanding of the potential of the latest communication technologies. (Peter Waterman 1996: 50-51)

On the basis of the analysis in this study fourth generation development strategies *necessarily* challenge an actor such as the churches, to become actively involved in the formal terrain of communication. As promoters of the new social movements politics, they are challenged in the following way:

They are challenged to engage in strategies that will *strengthen the new social movement and civil society activities and discourses specifically through the use of the media and new communication technologies*. This implies that they engage with other civil society actors in strategies that will *counter the consolidating and disempowering effects in world communication, that will democratise world communication and thereby open up spaces and resources for the discourses and activities of the new social movements*. In a more general sense, it implies that they *act as facilitators, enablers and catalysts of a new civil society dynamics by generating resources and contributing to a communication infrastructure through which the new social movements and a larger civil society solidarity may flourish.*

However, let we immediately qualify such an anticipated involvement by stating that a meaningful contribution by the churches is here by no means self-evident. Generally

speaking, it can be said that the churches' engagement with modern communication technology and the media has not gone beyond a more narrow evangelical and ecclesiastical self-interest. Within a progressive circle such as the WCC, there also appears to be *no concentrated focus on the issue of communication in their preoccupation with development.* As Neville Jayaweera, in one of only a few meaningful writings that involve the churches, has concluded about, amongst others[54], this circle's (incomprehensible) lack of contribution to the concept of a New International Information Order (NIIO):

> The WCC, more than any other Church organisation, had the resources and the moral authority to speak out on this issue as it had indeed spoken on such issues as racism, disarmament, human rights, etc. It represents and speaks for more than ninety percent of the Churches outside the Roman Catholic and Fundamentalist Churches. Its voice is recognised and respected by the United Nations, and individual sovereign countries. Ideologically, at least during the past decade, it has fearlessly witnessed to issues involving the rights and claims of poor and oppressed societies, often and not surprisingly, at great cost to itself. Why then has the WCC been muted on the issue of the NIIO? (1980: 19)

In this article Jayaweera also stated two reasons "why the Churches should have been in the vanguard" of the struggle for a NIIO. The NIIO concept was firstly "fundamentally a concern for *values*" that one might assume the churches fully embrace: truth, justice, fairplay, respect for the human individual, the defence of the weak and the oppressed, human rights, including the right to communicate and to be informed and educated, cultural equality, etc. (1980: 18; italics added).

Secondly, amongst the global institutions, the churches' engagement in communication could be regarded as unprecedented. They had invested hundreds of million of dollars annually to communicate their message and for making the Christian position on various issues known. They were in fact communicating all the time, reaching out to all corners of the globe: through the operation of radio and TV stations, the publication of books, periodicals, magazines, newspapers, tracts and

[54] Jayaweera's review of the churches also included other large mainline church groupings, namely the Roman Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation. According to him these groupings also lacked conspicuously in making a meaningful contribution to the NIIO debate (see 1980: 19-20).

comics, the production of films, songs, drama and dance, grassroots parish networks, cellular groups and workshops, Bible study classes and house prayer groups (ibid)[55].

In his explanation of what he called the paralysis, the inability and unwillingness of the churches to involve themselves in the communication debate, we may note how Jayaweera's criticism of the churches is very much in line with a basic assumption in our own study. For him such a paralysis could be ascribed to the fact that "(t)he churches *lack a social sciences approach* and remain addicted to looking at empirical phenomena in *theological* terms" (1980: 20; italics added). It can be said that they "have never felt a need for a valid 'theory' of communication" as they basically remain interested "in one-way flow mass media" for evangelising purposes. Lacking any critical theoretical competence, they had also been incapable of drawing the link between the interrelated question of a NIIO and a New International Economic Order (NIEO), to recognise that the debate on communication is simultaneously a debate on economic justice and the call for a NIIO is merely an extension of the demand for a new economic order into the communication sector (ibid). The following quote well summarises Jayaweera's argument, but also what could *from a fourth generation development approach* be stipulated as the basic problem of theological and ecclesiastical debates on development in general:

> It is nearly five hundred years since theology was dethroned from its self-appointed position as queen of the sciences. But most Churches and Church organisations generally behave as if Francis Bacon and John Stuart Mill had never lived. An empirical hypothesis, by definition, is more flexible and better able to respond to a changing reality than theological formulation. And communication, both as structure and as process, is primarily an empirical phenomenon. Unless communication is first analysed an understood in empirical terms, no amount of theological cerebration will give us the tools with which to manage it effectively. But Churches prefer to address themselves to the communication problematic in theological terms. They talk constantly of the 'Theology of Communication'. In a sense one can even formulate a

[55] Giving some direct statistics of the churches' involvement in communication, Jayaweera (1980: 18) pointed out that in the 1980s in the United States alone, Christian groups and churches owned and operated 998 radio stations and 27 TV stations exclusively for communicating the Gospel. In addition, Christian groups in the USA were spending over $500 million a year on buying airtime on the national networks and private local stations. Scattered around the world, there were in all over 71 transcontinental and global broadcasting stations transmitting the Christian message on SW radio daily.

> 'theology of bridge building' but no one would want to risk crossing a bridge constructed on theological principles. This is no less true of communication. (ibid)[56]

We may conclude that a critical perspective such as the above by Jayaweera cannot be neglected when we are envisaging a fourth generation development contribution by the churches, specifically in the area of communication. They are required to make the field of 'communication for development' an area of proper specialisation. This will mean that social theories of the new informational or 'Network Society' as set out in 6.4 of this study, will become the framework for *all contextual* understanding, analysis and action by the churches.

In line with our first working concept of 'resistance identities', for the churches it will mean specialising in that area in which the formal practical and theoretical field of communication correlates with the field of alternative development or 'another' development and which can be termed *alternative communication* (AC) (see Hamelink 1994: 137-138; Lewis 1993: 12; Melkote 1991: chap. 7; Stangelaar 1985: 11-20; Waterman 1996a: 25). Here, of course, one is first of all thinking of *local* 'resistance' initiatives to the dominant information capitalist system (see Stangelaar 1985: 11, 13-16; Waterman 1996a: 25), which, on the practical level, may emanate in concrete initiatives such as "local stations, small community newspapers, minority media, counter-information magazines, theatre groups, pirate radio/TV stations, and alternative contents in mainstream media" (Hamelink 1994: 137-138). Guided by our determination in the previous subsection by which the concept of 'resistance identities' constantly anticipates and moves towards the actualisation of 'project identities', one is here thinking of the conceptualisation and actualisation of initiatives that confirm ordinary people as "the active participants in the communication process" and the active designers of "their own meaning systems instead of passively consum-

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[56] In an earlier study on the participation of the churches in public communication, Cees Hamelink raised a similar critique. He concluded that the nature of the churches' involvement in communication was inherently *anti-dialectical* by nature, that they operated without any proper theory of society by which they could critically analyse the socio-political and ideological context of their own communication praxis, which isolates public communication from the total social context (and thus from the problem of power and ideology). As a reversal of this, Hamelink proposed an approach/perspective for the churches according to which theological reflection and communication praxis are *dialectically* related, whereby theological reflection departs from a critical social theory that reveals the churches' own position (ideological and political) and which enables them to develop an alternative communication praxis. In ecumenical terms, it would imply a reversal from the "church and society" debate to a "society and church" debate (see 1975: 48-50, 127-130).

ing the meaning system of the prevailing social order" (Hamelink 1994: 142). On a concrete, practical level, for the churches it would mean actively supporting a people's media (see Hamelink 1994: 142-144), and moving still closer to the notion of project identities, supporting the construction of *people's networks* that (most clearly in the movement from 'resistance' to 'project identities') exploit the potential of the new communication technologies and link local peoples to larger regional and global communication networks in 'cyber space' (see Hamelink 1994: 142-145).[57]

In line with our second working concept of 'project identities', it will, for the churches, mean specialising in the field of *world communication.* It will mean that their ethical and value critiques become concrete in terms of the disempowering effects (economically, politically, socially and culturally) of global information capitalism on ordinary people (see Hamelink 1994: 132-132), that their criticisms are practically rooted in their active support for a *global civil society* initiative aiming "to shape world communication politics in accordance with people's interests" (Hamelink 1994a: 315; see also Hamelink 1994: 145-149). Pertaining to the ideal of "an active self-organizing global civil society" (Hamelink 1994: 147) that in accordance with the analytic framework in 6.4 of this study, "is particularly active and effective on the terrain of communication, media...[and] culture" (Waterman, forthcoming), it, for the churches, will mean joining the new social movements in what Hamelink identified as "a process of learning, of identifying issues as communication issues, of recognizing the micro/macro connection" (1994a: 315; see also 1994: 147). According to Ham-

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[57] (1) Concrete examples of the kind of 'resistance identities' referred to in this paragraph would be those by Castells that we have pointed out in 6.4, namely the Mexican Zapatistas (see p. 200) and the Condepa movement in Bolivia (see footnote 32).

(2) Our concept of 'alternative communication' (AC) comes close here to the one identified by Peter Waterman. Having first of all listed a number of fundamental and interdependent characteristics of AC that comprise a strong element of a 'resistance' meaning, Waterman has otherwise been interested in an AC project that, while retaining its peculiar cultural/social identity, is outwardly orientated, overlaps and relates to both the dominant system of communication and the new (transnational) social movements and civil society. As he explained:

> I would like to suggest that alternative communication and culture are the project, or projects, of democratically-minded, theoretically-critical and socially-committed intellectuals (academics, professionals, artists, organisers), oriented towards the new social movements and civil society (both nationally and globally). 'Alternative' is thus placed, in both class and cultural terms, in tension with the 'dominant' and the 'popular'. The three could be thought of as overlapping, interpenetrating and mutually-determining cultural spheres, physical spaces/geographical places, or even particular cultural products... It allows for, and even requires, 'alternative' media or cultural actors to operate in relation to, and within, both other spheres as well as their own. It recognises 'alternative' cultural projects, spaces and places as marginal in power terms but maximal in terms of cultural freedom and innovation. (1996a: 25)

elink, as this ought to lead to the following kind of dynamic, in which we can determine the churches should participate but a dynamic which they also need to help create by contributing to the needed resources and infrastructure:

> The defence of local self-determination needs global action. Local spaces have to link transnationally to discover how people's right to communicate is curbed by current political practice. Linking can take place through telecommunication, and computer networks are more easily accessible than before. Computer conferences on the main concerns in world communication are a feasible project. Joint actions can be planned for intervention in the global arena in an autonomous manner. People across the globe can conclude private agreements and alternative treaties in the various issue areas of world communication. (Hamelink 1994a: 315)

On a more *general* practical level, which goes beyond the specific aim to democratise world communication through the actual use of modern communication technology, a recent proposal by Robert Cassani to establish a global *Civil Society Development Fund* may well guide the churches in their quest for concrete modes of action in the sphere of development and communication. Cassani argued that such a fund had become necessary to secure civil society's *independence* vis-à-vis the dominant political and economic powers, and in meeting the infrastructure requirements of civil society so that it can seek its own solutions to global problems (see 1995: 215-217). He furthermore emphasised that the *information and communications 'infrastructure' needs of civil society in the broadest sense had to be the principle beneficiaries of the Fund* (1995: 220). These could be considered the needs that have become indispensable to a civil society to forge a global identity and engage in "(g)lobal lobbying, the coordination of campaigns and the exchange of information and real-time media relations" (1995: 217). As a number of communication specific needs could be identified that such a fund ought to support and sustain:

* the need to subsidise access fees to electronic communications systems;

* the information and communication needs of those who facilitate or engage in fair trade;

* the need for an independent global non-commercial, non-governmental television network to carry news and information from a plurality of perspectives, without the pressure of purely advertising-driven programming;

* the need for capacity building in the use and maintenance of modern communication technology and access to digital communications on a utility or use basis especially for communities in low-income countries;

* the need to support the travel and communication expenses tied to civil society participation in humanitarian or disaster relief operations (1995: 220-221).

We may propagate that the churches could play an important facilitating, enabling and catalysing role by making a sustained financial and organisational contribution to the above kind of enterprise. Also, this kind of enterprise could guide the churches in how to reapply their existing communication resources on local and regional levels, and in the areas in which they (as actors that are often skilled in the new communication technologies) might play a capacity building and training role. As the Fund would operate on a fully decentralised basis and comprise "a web of regional and local affiliates" (1995: 215) that seek to enhance the capacities of poor people to participate in informational society (1995: 220), this is also the kind of enterprise that churches at local and regional levels might feel close to. At the very least, it denotes the *kind* of enterprise that ought to be imitated by churches at local and regional levels who are serious about strengthening civil society and about playing fourth generation development roles.

Communication, a fourth generation development perspective confirms, is basic to an authentic people-centred development process. Put in the negative, without sufficient access to the various mediums of communication, there can be no mobilisation of a civil society, no authentic participation by people, control of their immediate environment and active design of their own meaning systems (social and cultural), no proper conscientisation and education on people-centred development issues and values, no flourishing of the new social movements. As Hamelink pointed out, it (communication) is basic to people's *empowerment*:

> The term empowerment literally means that people are given power. It refers to a process in which people achieve the capacity to control decisions effecting their lives. Empowerment enables people to define themselves and to construct their own identities. Empowerment can be the outcome of an international strategy which is either initiated externally by empowering agents or solicited by disempowered people... Much like communication is an important tool of disempowerment, it plays a significant role in empowerment. People's power requires knowledge about the

> decisions that affect their lives and information about what they can do about these decisions. People's power also needs expression, dialogue and the sharing of experiences. (1994: 132-133)

Yet, as Hamelink emphasised, empowerment through communication in the context of contemporary world communication cannot be assumed. He concluded that in order for this to happen, "to create world communication politics 'as if people matter'... *new civil initiatives*... [were] needed". Postulated as a basic condition: "If people's interests are to be accommodated, *people will have to claim the right to communicate*." (1994a: 314-315; italics added) It would require from the new social movements to mobilise around the issue of communication as vigorously as they have around other issues:

> So far, social movements have expressed their concern about the world in such fields as human rights, security, environment and development, but not in connection with world communication. Yet people's daily lives are affected by world communication in essential ways. We need therefore, much like the green movement and the peace movement, a communication movement. (1994a: 315)

In view of such a quest for new civil initiatives in the field of communication Hamelink indicated that a first step in this regard "could be the worldwide adoption by individuals and movements of a *People's Communication Charter*" (1994: 148; italics added). Launched as an ongoing initiative[58] by a number of organisations[59], we may conclude with Hamelink that this Charter "could provide the common framework for all those who share the belief that people should be active and critical participants in their social reality and capable of governing themselves" (ibid). It can be noted in brief that it is a document which aims *to inspire political action around an integrated communication and human rights perspective*[60]. As stated in the introduction to the Charter, its aim is "to bring to cultural policy-making a set of standards that represent rights and responsibilities to be observed in all democratic countries and in international law". Based on the recognition that "communication is basic to the life

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[58] An updated version has been obtained from Cees Hamelink at the Centre of Communication and Human Rights by e-mail: hamelink@antenna.nl. Date: 18 July 1996.

[59] Centre for Communication and Human Rights (The Netherlands), Third World Network (Malaysia), AMARC-World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (Peru/Canada), Cultural Environment Movement (USA).

[60] As indicated at the end of the Charter, it has been informed and benefited from various agreements and declarations in the field of international law and human rights.

of all individuals", it contains 18 standards that aims to protect people's rights and dignity in the area of communication and to democratise world communication on behalf of ordinary people. They are the rights to: (i) *respect* (in accordance with the basic human rights and standards of dignity, integrity, identity and non-discrimination); (ii) *freedom* (of expression); (iii) *access* (to local and global resources for communication); (iv) *independence* (in the area of communication); (v) *literacy*; (vi) *protection of journalists*; (vii) the *right of reply and redress*; (viii) *diversity of languages*; (ix) (protection of) *cultural identity*; (x) *participation in policy-making* (in the areas of communication and culture); (xi) *children's rights*; (xiii) (access to) *cyberspace*; (xiv) *privacy*; (xv) (protection from) *harm* (i.e. physical, psychological and social violation of individuals and groups by the media); (xvi) (juridical) *justice*; (xvii) *consumption* (that is physically and psychologically healthy); *accountability* (to the general public); (xviii) *implementation* (of the Charter).

In addition to the idea of a Global Civil Society Fund (which is especially directed to civil society's needs in the field of communication), we may conclude that The People's Communication Charter constitutes a most meaningful (already existing) initiative that can give concrete direction to the churches' (both local and global) participation in fourth generation development strategies. An initiative that integrates the issues of communication, human rights, culture and development into a single framework, and which seeks to continuously broaden its support base, the adoption of the Charter may be regarded as a very worthwhile challenge to the churches. Spelled out in question form, could the churches at local, national and global levels become the meaningful supporters of the Charter? Could they subscribe to it through their various bodies and make it part of their theological, development and educational framework? Could they become part of a larger solidarity movement that places the agenda of the Charter at the center of their activities for transformation and justice?

Also overlapping with what we have recognised as the churches' contribution to a global Civil Society Development Fund, could the churches become the real supporters of those groups already involved in the areas of communication and human rights as stated in the Charter (cf. Hamelink 1975: 129)? Could they make their own communication structures available to such groups, by engaging in those diverse range of areas or issues themselves? Could they provide moral, political, ideological,

financial and infrastructural support for the various groups and victimised involved? Could the churches through its various national and international bodies become an important voice to expose and criticise the present international economic order, by bringing a fundamental communication perspective into such critique on the basis of the Charter?

As Hamelink suggested in an earlier study, could the churches make a significant contribution to the creation of *conditions* under which people will become *competent to deal with communication* (1975: 130)? On a very concrete grassroots level, similarly to what we have identified under the idea of a global Civil Society Development Fund, could the churches engage in initiatives of education, training and conscientisation that will enable ordinary and poor people to acquire what The People's Communication Charter stipulates in its 5th article as the "skills necessary to participate fully in public communication": literacy in reading, writing, story-telling, critical media awareness, computer skills and education about the role of communication in society?

7.3.3 Alternative development policy

> Given the complexity of contemporary social, political, and ethical issues, the church can no longer be content to focus its public ministry primarily on the issuance of social statements and public proclamations... We have enough prophets who fire their moral broadsides against the evils of our society; we have enough policy-makers who determine our future through efficiency studies and cost-effective analyses. What we lack are those who combine prophetic vision with careful analysis; and until we cultivate and nurture such persons, our public life will remain diffuse and spiritless. (Ronald Thiemann 1991: 41-42)

In this study the hypothesis has been sustained that the churches best fit the unlimited space of the fourth generation development realm in which the emphasis falls on a 'politics of ideas', on values, ideas, ethics, on civil society networking. Yet, this emphasis does not mean that the fourth generation strategic mode constitutes a 'soft option' for the churches whereby they may bypass the more formal and rigorous processes of social theoretical analysis and policy-making. Whereas it can be said that this is already clearly implied in our discussion of the first two beacons above, which challenge the churches to new levels of social theoretical specialisation and public

(political) action in various areas (economics, communication, etc.), the challenge to become meaningful actors on the level of formal/official development policy-making *in general*, should be stated as a third beacon for the churches in fourth generation development. Consequently, the churches are not less than other actors of civil society challenged to move towards greater *specificity* and engage in the policy-making processes that ultimately determine the direction that development takes. Their marginalisation in the public sphere (as we have observed in the introduction of this study) does not exempt them from countering this position and seek a higher public profile. It constitutes a challenge that the churches cannot shy away from, one which will ultimately determine their credibility and the *quality* of their development involvement. They are challenged to make a constructive contribution to the conceptualisation and implementation of policies that ought to change institutions, structures and organisation in general on the decentralised and global levels of society. They are challenged to infiltrate the corridors of power and speak and operate on the *same* concrete public level as the rulers and decision-makers of society.

From a different angle, our emphasis on the complementary relation between third and fourth generation development strategies, cannot but lead the churches to develop skills and seek opportunities in the formal policy-making arena. While the mode of fourth generation development action ultimately goes beyond this formal arena, as we concluded in 5.4, the other side of our perspective nevertheless remains. As we concluded (in 5.4 but especially also at the beginning of this chapter), fourth generation development strategies cannot do without the managerial, organisational and policy-making skills developed in the third generation mould of action. This mode of involvement needs those skills in order for its actors to become *concrete*, *constructive* and *effective* in terms of the global transformation that they want to achieve. Moreover, third and fourth generation strategic orientations can be seen as belonging to *the same people-centred development vision.* This recognition asks from actors of the fourth generation strategic development orientation to also become operative on the level and modes of involvement set out in the third generation development orientation. It asks from those actors to become involved in formal policy-making activity on *all* levels of society, in a way that their involvement will manifest the reinforcing and complementary nature of third and fourth generation

development strategies. It asks from those actors to influence the formal operational arenas of *both* third and fourth generation development strategic action in the direction of the new social movement values that are emphasised in the fourth generation orientation.

Thus, the framework and contents that have been set out in chapter four of this study become just as important for the churches (in addition to the framework and contents that have been set out in chapters five and six). A chapter in which the innovative element in the third generation strategic development orientation has in particular been pointed out, there the *foundation* can be found for a serious involvement by the churches in development. There the churches will find the core of a proper social scientific theorising about development that ought to appeal to their own normative orientation[61]. On the basis of such theorising, there the churches are also orientated towards a new kind of *political* involvement[62], which as we have further seen, is closely linked to the notion of a *new professionalism* in which actors of a people-centred development should, inevitably, develop new capacities in the areas of policy-making, management, organisational development, and so on[63]. There the churches and other people-centred development actors can find *the perspectives on theory, skills and strategy that if adapted to, would give them the solid basis from where they can truly excel in the sphere of fourth generation development activity (in so far as this sphere also requires concrete policy, managerial and organisational alternatives).*

Yet, the discussion in chapter four and our reliance on an interrelated NGO and people-centred development debate in this study in general for a deepening perspective on the strategic involvement of the churches in development (i.e. from the starting-point of David Korten's analysis, which also extends to chapter five), take on a further important meaning on the *phenomenological* level. Particularly with regard to our comparative view of the ecumenical and NGO development debates at the start of chapter four[64], whereas that view should not be read as a complete identification of

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[61] See again 4.3.1.

[62] See again 4.3.2.

[63] See again 4.3.3.

[64] See again 4.1.

the churches with the NGO sector (as if the social identity of the churches can be summarised by the sum total of the contemporary NGO phenomenon), it otherwise suggested the substantial overlapping between these two sectors in the field of development, historically, strategically and organisationally.

As allowed and demanded by the new *worldly* determination in the ecumenical development debate and the new civil society solidarity perspectives that ultimately determine fourth as well as third generation[65] development strategies, it can be stated here as a basic premise that *the phenomenological overlapping between the church and NGO sectors ought to receive far greater consideration in the theological-ecclesiastical debates on development.* Based on their historical and sectoral overlapping, *the churches' path towards a meaningful participation in the formal public arena (as required in both the third and fourth generation development perspectives) should go through the contemporary NGO sector.* Being the less skilled, less informed and less experienced affiliate today, *the churches are to seek renewed cooperation, affiliation and integration in the field of development with their NGO counterparts. Through, and only through, seeking alliances with and becoming part of an ever more sophisticated NGO network, which is increasingly challenging but also cooperating with the world's major policy-makers (such as the World Bank, United Nations, governments)* (see Coate, Alger and Lipschutz 1996: 94; Uvin 1995: 509; Poverty and Social Policy Department, World Bank 1997: 28-36)[66], *the churches could make a meaningful (people-centred) contribution to the arena of development policy.*

As the discussion in chapter four may suggest, the contemporary NGO sector, from the starting-point of its initial historical overlapping with the churches, has embarked on a *secular* development path through which it is today to a (far) greater extent than is the case with the churches, acknowledged as a meaningful role player by the main secular development actors. As such, the contemporary NGO sector, largely in its secular guise separated from the churches, has progressed towards levels of formal

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[65] See again the second and third perspectives emanating from the discussion in 4.3.2 (pp. 126-129).

[66] See also again 4.3.2 (p. 125) where we noted how a similar claim on the progress by NGOs in the formal policy-making arena had been made by authors of the book, *Government-NGO Relations in Asia. Prospects and Challenges for People-Centred Development.*

public development involvement far beyond the churches. Over against the domains of religious life in which the peculiar (unique) identity of the churches rightly ought to be sustained (such as cultic and personal worship, pastoral care), *the churches are summoned to emulate to a greater extent this secular inclination of the NGO sector in the area of development.* It can be claimed that this will be the only way for the churches to, on a systematic and specialised basis, gain entry to and acceptance in the arena of formal development policy-making. Motivated by and on the basis of their faith and moral commitment, the churches are required to, as *one* extension of their involvement in human life, *present themselves as development-oriented organisations that in a capable way speak a predominant secular social scientific discourse of development and that are fully integrated in the coalition activities of the NGO sector as a whole. It requires that they will, in a formal way, promote an NGO identity and activity that, simultaneously, display the new professional, voluntary, participatory and democratic proficiencies that we had come to point out in the discussion in chapters four and five.*

Whereas it is true that the notion of "public church means different things to different writers", as two participants in what has come to be known in recent decades as the debates on '*public theology*' and the '*public church*'[67] have observed (Hessel and Hudnut-Beumler 1993: 297), among these debates our own perspective may find meaningful support. Beyond the theological-ecclesiastical and NGO development debates, we may note in conclusion of this subsection how we encounter among these debates an emphasis on the need for the churches to progress to a policy involvement similarly to what we have recognised above (though we have more specifically come to focus on the issue of development while the debates on public theology and the public church focus on the issue of public and policy involvement in general).

As evident from the quote with which we started this subsection, we encounter among the current debates on public theology and the public church the perspective, similarly to our own, which states that the churches need to convert their moral discourses and statements into more specific *policy* discourses (see Lategan 1995: 226; Hessel and

[67] In his reflection on the notion of public church, James Fowler (1991: 153) noted that the term was first coined by the American theologian, Martin Marty, in a book with that title published in 1981 (Martin E. Marty 1981. *The Public Church*. New York: Crossroad).

Hudnut-Beumler 1993: 299). In these debates, the churches and Christian theology are summoned to make such a policy contribution not only for the sake of a new kind of normative policy determination, in which a value or ethical commitment would creatively combine with careful analysis (Thiemann 1991: 41-42), but also for the sake of their own future and meaningful place in a rapidly changing society (collectively speaking) (Lategan 1995: 220). Furthermore, they will be able to make such a contribution only on the basis of an engagement in "new forms of education" through which "genuine debate and dialogue about crucial public issues can take place" (Thiemann 1991: 42). They are called to make such a contribution on the basis of a worldly, solidarity and interactive determination very much in accordance to our own determination in this study:

> The spirituality (or spirited mission) of a public church... combines faith commitment with civil dialogue, prophetic passion with public sense... it seeks the transformation of the social order that affects, and should be affected by people of faith. A church oriented to public ministry *is open to the world*, speaking and acting beyond its walls *for the common good*, so that others notice, interact, and respond. It is people embodying their faith *in social concert and coalition*. (Hessel and Hudnut-Beumler 1993: 299-300; italics added)

Against the background of the above generally stated intention of a public theology or church, we can at this point turn to the proposal for an interactive, constructive mode of theological discourse in the public arena which has been made by the South African scholar, Bernard Lategan. Making a contribution that can be regarded as representing a higher point of hermeneutical and conceptual sophistication in the general public theological debate, in this proposal Lategan pointed out the need for a *different* type of theological discourse in the post-South African context that can be applied to our line of thinking in this subsection.

Following David Tracy's (a foremost exponent of the contemporary public theological debate) refined distinction between three different publics of theology (the academy, the church and society at large), Lategan focused particularly on the meaning and implications of the *third* public for theological discourse (1995: 219). In accordance with our recognition earlier in this subsection of the validity of a more peculiar church identity in certain instances or contexts, Lategan likewise emphasised his intention not to undermine the importance of more traditional *theological* and *faith* discourses that

are conducted in the contexts of the first two publics, but only to add another kind of discourse:

> In order to avoid any misunderstanding, it must be clearly stated that the intention of this proposal is *neither* the replacement of existing modes of discourse by a 'superior' form, *nor* the devaluation of alternative modes. The argument is, rather, one of 'horses for courses'. The suitability and effectiveness of a particular discourse are in direct relation to the purpose for which it is employed. But more than that, the different modes of discourse play a *supporting* role in relation to each other. Intra-textual analysis, rediscovering of the tradition, reformulation and re-affirmation of dogma, describing the world of the text in its own terms, narrating the story of Biblical texts for their own sake, explaining and defending the truth claims of theology, prophetic resistance and confrontation, uncompromising witnessing, and apologetics of a more subtle or a more aggressive kind, all have their validity and function. The issue is to take into account which public one is dealing with, and to decide on which mode or modes would be suitable for that purpose. Furthermore, the more clarity that can be obtained in the context of the second public regarding the nature and content of faith propositions, the more effectively the discourse with the third public can be conducted. The different modes are complementary to each other and should be valued for their supportive contribution. (1995: 225)

Beyond the preservation of theological and faith discourses in the first two publics, within this framework there ought to, and could be a legitimate and necessary place for a different type of theological discourse suiting the context of the third public (i.e. larger society) - a type or style of discourse that would *complement* (and not oppose!) the modes of discourse conducted in the contexts of the first two publics. Lategan determined that in the third public theology and Christianity had to respond to "the need to contribute to the establishment of a new public ethos in civil society" (1995: 225). It could be seen as a crucial extension of their task (as a primary value or ethical actor), yet, one in which they must *forsake* their privileged position. In order to effectively contribute and participate in this public, theology would be required "to move beyond its preoccupation with itself, beyond being concerned primarily with the validity of its own truth claims, beyond its defensive attitude, beyond its experience of marginalisation and its resignation of not being able to influence civil society" (1995: 225-226). Theology would be required to adopt a new *style* of discourse (a new form of language), for the sake of a *wider* cause:

> The plea is, therefore, to move beyond what is conventionally understood as theological discourse and to explore the possibilities of a form of language that is not primarily interested in preserving the integrity of theology, but to serve a wider cause. The leading question for this purpose is not, How do we defend Christian truth claims? but, What contribution can theology make to the process of developing and establishing a new public ethos?
>
> What is proposed here, comes close to what Gustafson (1988: 45[68]) calls 'policy discourse' - a discourse 'which seeks to recommend or prescribe quite particular courses of action about quite specific issues'. As we have already seen, it is a discourse conducted in the public arena with the focus on concrete issues, within the constraints of the possible. It has the added dimension of taking responsibility for what is proposed in this discourse, and therefore demands accountability. Gustafson points out that it is a discourse not conducted 'by external observers, but by the persons who have the responsibility to make choices and to carry out the actions that are required by the choices' (1988: 46). (1995: 226-227)

We may end here by pointing out the seven characteristics that Lategan finally emphasised as indispensable for theology to succeed in such a *policy*-specific discourse. Reiterating in fact much of what we have attempted to say in this subsection, these characteristics can be presented as a structured set of proposals that should also determine the way for the churches, as development-oriented NGOs, to become authentic actors on the formal terrain of development policy-making:

Firstly, theology/the churches as development-oriented NGOs would be required to adopt a *non-prescriptive* mode of discourse in which their attitude "should rather be one of joint discovery, allowing parties in the public debate to participate on their own terms and articulate from their own experience and perspective - letting issues and formulations emerge before directing and confining the discourse" (1995: 227).

Secondly, theology/the churches as development-oriented NGOs would be required to adopt an *inclusive* style of discourse, by which they are open to the flow of ideas, to the fundamentally new and unexpected and to all possible contributions (ibid).

Thirdly, theology/the churches as development-oriented NGOs would be required to adopt an *interactive*, *participatory* style of discourse, which is no longer developed and conducted in the protected environment of the 'own group'. "It implies the

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[68] Gustafson, J M 1988. *Varieties of Moral Discourse: Prophetic, Narrative, Ethic and Policy*. Grand Rapids: Calvin College.

willingness, not to claim a privileged position for theology, but to become vulnerable, and to be challenged." (ibid)

Fourthly, theology/the churches as development-oriented NGOs would be required to adopt a discourse that gives evidence of *hermeneutical* competence, "that is, familiarity with different discourses, but also the ability to move between these discourses and to mediate and interpret issues as they are expressed and experienced in different contexts" (ibid).

Fifthly, theology/the churches as development-oriented NGOs would be required to adopt a *serving* mode of discourse, by which they lose and transcend themselves "to become liberated in service to the other" (ibid).

Sixthly, theology/the churches as development-oriented NGOs would be required to adopt new kind of *constructive* discourse, which goes beyond resistance and protest and display "a willingness to reach out, to build, to take responsibility, and to jointly map out a possible course of action" (ibid).

Seventhly, theology/the churches as development-oriented NGOs would be required to adopt a new mode of *anonymous*, *secular* or *camouflaged* discourse, which is no longer formulated in recognisable theological language and effectively translates theological concepts in a public discourse accessible to participants from other discourses, in a form that is genuinely *public*[69] (1995: 228).

7.3.4 'Soft culture'

> Another way to state the need for a transformation in consciousness might be in terms of a shift from the dominance of traditional masculine consciousness to the dominance, or preferably a melding into the dominant culture, of critical elements of traditional feminine consciousness. Growth-centred development institutionalizes the masculine ideals of competition, empire and conquest. It is intrusive and

[69] See here again our statement in footnote 17 in the introduction (p. 11) where we indicated such a mode of anonymous or secular discourse as basically the mode of discourse to which this study as a whole adheres to but with the exception that we, at particular moments or stages, allow more explicit theological/religious discourse to contribute to the interdisciplinary perspective. This exception indicates the marginal difference between our own position and that of Lategan. Whereas our study also fully locates itself in the third public and aspires to the rules/conditions of participating in this public, as should be clearly evident from our exposition in this subsection (!), it, in contrast to Lategan, allows for a *selective* contribution that is formulated in the realm of theology/religion itself. In the case of Lategan such a contribution is restricted/referred back to the first two publics (the academy, the church), whereas in our case this demarcation rather becomes blurred. Adhering by and large to the rules/conditions of the third public, in our case the relation between the three publics becomes more than a complementary one, but one in which the three publics at times also overlap.

> individualistic. It seeks symbols of dominance and power over others and nature. People-centred development depends on a realization of traditionally more feminine ideals of a nurturing family, and community, place, continuity, conserving, reconciliation, caring and reverence for nature and the continuous regeneration of life. (David Korten 1990: 168-169)

As an extension of the element of spiritual development that Korten has identified as a central dimension of fourth generation development, the notion of '*soft culture*' can be proposed as a fourth, most important beacon for the churches. It appears that this notion in an appropriate manner summarises what Korten has defined as 'spiritual development'[70], but also much of authors from the WOMP/*Alternatives* circle's appreciation of what religion and its institutions have to offer to their agenda of transformation[71]. As such, this notion best highlights what the churches can offer as *religious* and *idea* institutions (contrary to the churches as development-oriented NGOs, with reference to the previous subsection) that, legitimately and meaningfully, draw on their *own* metaphors and spiritual language[72], in addition to the normative language/discourses from the social sciences[73].

It can be said that the notion of 'soft culture' presents us with another way of looking at a social movement approach to development. It outrightly pertains to the characteristic of a 'politics of unlimited space' that we have emphasised in this study[74] and fully draws on the ethico-political language of the new social movements, i.e. *predominantly in the sense of Manuel Castells' notion of 'project identities'*. Yet, as indicated by the concept of 'soft culture', here, beyond anything else, the aspect of *culture* is focused upon. It pertains to a description of society and human behaviour in which *the cultural element merges with the aspect of spirituality, values and ethics.* In this sense, 'soft culture' constitutes the counterpoint to a contemporary society characterised by hard, macho (male) culture, aggression and egoism, which have been

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[70] This can be argued on the basis of the quote at the start of this subsection which is extracted from Korten's discussion on the element of spiritual development. See again the discussion on pp. 158-159 in chapter five.

[71] See again 6.2.2.

[72] With reference to footnote 69, here we have the clearest case in point of the selective discursive contribution by the churches (and other religious institutions) to the third public that is formulated (partly!) within their own realm.

[73] It will become clear in the course of the discussion in this subsection how the social scientific contribution is not neglected and how we, in fact, to a greater extent draw on this contribution to formulate our perspective on the churches' participation in 'soft culture'.

[74] See again the exposition of this characteristic in the introduction (p. 8 onwards) and 5.4.

internalised in society's structures and institutions and in human behaviour in general. In all, we can say that the idea of 'soft culture' is to serve as the ultimate expression of a totally *different society* (i.e. different to the existing one), as a concept giving contents to new meaningful expressions of thinking, living, doing and relating in society as a whole.

It must be stressed (in accordance with our adherence to the notion of 'project identities' here) that the expression of 'soft culture' does not merely relate to what many theorists of an 'alternative development' or 'post-development' notion understand as the recovering of traditional cultures (as the embodiment of 'Gemeinschaft' versus 'Geselschaft') (see Goulet 1995: 137-152; Esteva 1993: 20-23; 1987; 125-152; Rahnema 1993: 127; 1993a: 169-172; Verhelst 1992: Part I-IV). Denoting a *common* project of transformation that relates to the *whole* of humanity, it indeed challenges a hegemonic[75] and homogenising superstructure and cultural transformation that are suppressing local cultural traditions. At the same time, it, however, also focuses on the suppressive elements inherent to traditional cultures, such as hierarchy, patriarchy, autarchy, sexism and fundamentalism. As a project towards greater *humanisation*, a mere romantisation of traditional cultures as the (re)generation of true humanity is resisted.

In the above sense, of pertaining to the whole of humanity, of going beyond human diversity, the aspect of 'soft culture' can also be related to the aspect of a *global ethic* that was discussed earlier[76]. It can be defined as the internalisation of a global ethic, of a spirit of compassion, of tolerance, of moderation, of solidarity in the overall behaviour, attitude and interaction of people in society. Closely related to a proposal by Johan Galtung for a *social development* project of *restructuration* and

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[75] In his essay on "Critical Political Economy" (see footnote 23, chapter six), Robert Cox has given a definition of 'hegemonic culture' which he linked in a direct way to the contemporary American way of life. As he meaningfully stated:

> The question of consumption models is closely linked to the question of hegemony. In the terms I have used, an indicator of hegemony would be a preponderant ontology that tends to absorb or subordinate all others. One intersubjective understanding of the world excludes all others and appears to be universal. It is often said that although United States economic power in the world has experienced a relative decline, the American way of life has never been a more powerful model. An American derived 'business civilization', to use Susan Strange's term, characterizes the globalizing elites; and American pop culture has projected an image of the good life that is a universal object of emulation - a universalized model of consumption. This constitutes a serious obstacle to the rethinking of social practices so as to be more compatible with the biosphere.' (1995: 43)

[76] See again the discussion on pp. 230-234.

reculturation, we may here speak of what Galtung has come to refer to as the need for "binding normative culture" and "binding ethical rules" or "norms" to become rooted in human beings - over against prevailing norms that are not binding, which is the meaning of "culturelessness" ("anomie") (1996: 394, 397-398).

To continue with Galtung's perspective, he determined that the aspect of 'soft culture' needed to also find concrete expression in society's *structural* and *institutional* formations. For him the realisation of 'soft culture', in a project of social development, is inseparable from the *rehumanisation* of society's structures and institutions. "What is needed is humanity." (1996: 410) This would, according to Galtung, first of all lie in the recreation, or strengthening of what he called "Beta structures", those structural and institutional formations of a *micro* kind expressing intimate, *horizontal* relationships. They are structures that do not only include close family and friends, but also colleagues and neighbours, workplaces and voluntary organisations (1996: 386).

While the emphasis is on Beta structures (because 'small is beautiful'), it has to be recognised that some *macro* structural and institutional formations remain important, what Galtung called "Alpha structures" (because 'some big is necessary'). However, the goal would be to rehumanise Alpha, to "create Beta inside Alpha of any kind - bureaucratic, corporate, academic" (1996: 408-409). It is a kind of Beta innovation well illustrated in a number of contemporary examples: the colloquium at university, the Grameen Bank (introduced in Bangladesh) in banking; the so-called 'Zehnergruppen', groups of ten people working together in economic organisations in the former East Germany; the 'Wohngemeinschaft' (WG), which signifies 'communes' of like-minded people living and consuming together, and sharing all the work of the household - an extended family except for the kinship factor (1996: 410)[77].

Importantly, in the context of this study, it can be pointed out how Galtung would finally appreciate the potential contribution of *religion* to the realisation of 'soft culture'. For him religion's special contribution is its *unifying* potential, that is, "(t)he

[77] One may draw a close parallel here between Galtung's notion and examples of Beta formations and Ulrich Duchrow's notion and examples of small-scale alternatives discussed in 7.3.1. See pp. 224-228, including footnotes 35-39.

notion of religion as linking, connecting, unifying" (1996: 411). If we may interpret this further, it pertains to religion's potential to create community and solidarity through a new spirit of *compassion* for others. Yet, it is a new spirit of compassion that should first and foremost start *with religion itself, with an inner struggle to promote the softer (unifying) aspects of the various religions* and to demote their harder aspects (i.e. aspects which make religion as much one of the most destructive and divisive forces in society). In Galtung's own words:

> Thus the most important struggle in the religio-scape... is not the traditional struggle among religions as to which one is the most suited to carry humanity forward, but the inner struggle between the unifying and the divisive forces... The important point is that the struggle is within rather than between and that each religion has this struggle on its agenda.[78] Moreover, the harder aspects (Inquisition, witch-burning) have no doubt contributed to giving religion a bad name. Quakers and Sufis, Buddhists and Baha'is offer much softer approaches, but none of them would be entirely free from the harder aspects. For humanists this would imply a softening of the line they sometimes draw between themselves and the religionists, following the tradition of eighteenth century Europe. In short, there is a message to everybody in the world that is No. 1 in the vocabulary of the present Dalai Lama: compassion. (1996: 411-412)

In accordance with the above framework we can speak more specifically about the Christian churches' contribution to 'soft culture'. Such a contribution requires from the churches, amidst the wave of fundamentalism currently overwhelming their ranks, to install a new spirit of *tolerance* and *open-mindedness* amongst their membership to others outside their direct circle, which should be extended to seeking new relations of partnership and solidarity with the latter on the terrain of fourth generation development. Furthermore, it asks of the churches to make the contents of a global ethic (in so far this has already been conceptualised) the basis of their message. At the heart of this should be *a new message of compassion*, as the highest marker of authentic religion to be rendered to *all* people, notwithstanding their descent; indeed, as the highest marker giving sense and purpose to human life. It ought to be concluded, however, that such a contribution should not be conceptualised on the

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[78] Such a starting-point for religion is also recognised in the *Declaration toward a Global Ethic* of the World Parliament of Religions that was discussed in 7.3.1. This document acknowledges that religion's contribution to a global ethic can only occur after eliminating "those conflicts which spring from the religions themselves, dismantling mutual arrogance, mistrust, prejudice, and even hostile images, and thus demonstrate respect for the traditions, holy places, feasts, and rituals of people who believe differently" (Parliament 1993: 22).

level of ideas alone, on bringing a particular message. In accordance with an integrated cultural/structural perspective, such a contribution anticipates that the churches *themselves* will become creative contributors of new Beta formations as envisioned by Galtung and as set out in 7.3.1[79].

Saying all the above, it, however, needs to be concluded that there would still be a consistent need to further fill in and enrich the notion of 'soft culture', over and above the already stated perspectives. It can be proposed that this is to become particularly clear from an engagement in *feminist* discourse, as a most important reactive and proactive discourse against male-infused hard culture. As captured in a work by Peta Bowden, in this discourse we are, for instance, presented with discourses of *caring*, with an "ethics of care" that is given further contents by a number of concepts denoting a variety of specific caring relationships and practices, namely *mothering*, *friendship*, *nursing* and *citizenship* (1997: 2). Confronting the existing, dominant "morality of gender inequality itself" and expressing the multiple practices of a new "gender sensitive ethics", a particularly challenging aspects of such an "ethics of care", in Bowden's conceptualisation, is to overcome "the traditional split between public and private values" and to extend the concept of caring "beyond the familiar ground of close, personal relationships into a realm of more attenuated and formalized practices" - i.e. into the public realm (1997: 8-9, 17). For Bowden, this would require "social restructuring that enables both wider responsibility for nurture and participatory parity for women in public affairs" (1997: 154). An "ethics of care" needs to go beyond and challenge existing 'progressive' social restructuring processes in the public sector, by demanding "a reconceived citizen ethics that reaches beyond the confines of distributive justice" (1997: 155). This is because of the fact that the latter has not really challenged the "relations of dominance and dependency, as well as the distributive norms" which social and political institutions conventionally sustain (ibid).

Bowden maintained that women who had taken responsibility for caring practices have only been permitted "marginal status in public and citizenship practices"; and, within the activities of the public sphere itself, social relations have instead followed

[79] See again footnote 77.

the same pattern, whereby female occupations are frequently subordinated and based on serving males' work. As she elaborated:

> Where responsibility for caring practices is acknowledged in the public sphere, the great majority of service workers are women whose 'natural' caring activities are frequently defined as unskilled labour and paid accordingly. Thus public policies that uphold and exploit the ideology of family-based practices of care simultaneously play into social structures that sustain multi-layered relations of dominance and subordination, and support women's dependency in citizenship. (1997: 157)

To end off our brief exploration of Bowden's work, her perspective on the possibilities of reversing the ongoing relations of dominance and subordination suffered by women (and thus of reversing hard culture!) could be meaningfully explained by indicating how it well reminiscences Anthony Giddens's notion of a '*life politics*' which he has propagated in one of his writings. For Giddens, in short, a new "politics of life decisions" and new life-style practices have emerged in a contemporary, detraditionalised society of manufactured risks and uncertainty, according to which people (in the industrialised and developing worlds) are beginning to reorientate their lives towards different values (1996: 372-373). Further on in his discussion, Giddens also referred to this as "*life-style bargaining*" whereby various "life-political actions between different groups of people" have taken shape (1996: 374).

In this regard, specifically under the banner of what he identified as "emotional life-style bargaining", Giddens has trodden on the terrain of Bowden. For Giddens too, a particularly important phenomenon of emotional life-style bargaining has come to be the changing relations between the sexes, whereby women across the world are today staking a claim to forms of autonomy previously denied or unavailable to them. While it very much points to a claim by women to achieve *equal* economic and political rights with men (thus to what Giddens identified elsewhere in his essay as traditional "emancipatory politics"), this claim, according to Giddens, also extends to the social and cultural level, into the realm of 'life politics' as "it raises issues to do with the very definition of what it is to be a woman, and therefore a man, in detraditionalizing societies and cultures" (1996: 376).

To return more specifically to Bowden, the above notion of Giddens, of a new 'life politics' by individuals and groups/coalitions, meets Bowden's further perspective on

the possibilities to overcome what she would see to be the prevailing relations of domination and subordination of women in society (i.e. the not yet realised "new social contract between men and women" envisioned by Giddens (ibid)). Accordingly, Bowden also emphasised the role of (conscientised) *public* participants[80] to carry forward "their personal experiences and aspirations of alternative practices" into the domain of *citizenship*. Through this kind of 'life politics' (Giddens) she anticipated a double process of *conflict* and *change* to take place increasingly in the public realm, changing institutional and social structures, linking the private with the public domain, and influencing and changing the collective value system and public debate. Taking the example of Scandinavian countries as a particular good case to illustrate her point, she explained:

> These possibilities for the transformation of allegedly personal interests into the broader concerns conventionally associated with citizenship are matched by opportunities to reconfigure the conventions of citizenship itself. While they are caught up within the dominant constructions of care-giving and citizenship, public participants also bring with them their personal experiences and aspirations of alternative practices. And it is with these understandings of the possibilities and choices, that different practices of care and different relations of citizenship allow, that they are able to 'work within-against' - to contest, reconceive, and change conventional relations of citizen care from within their conventional positions of involvement.
>
> These movements for change may not be swift: frequently, they entail humiliating compromise, tokenism and appropriation. But the sites of structural contradiction and conflict within the 'system' - the overlapping realms of both 'social services', and personal and informal caring - retain the potential for producing new norms, symbols and meanings for citizen care. Commentaries, on the Scandanavian experience at least, indicate that 'conscious institutionalization' of connections between public and private, community and personal aspects of life, has enabled women to become important partners in citizenship... [T]he treatment of responsibility for nurture as a public issue is facilitating the rethinking of public values that connect the marginalization of women and their practices of care, the injustices of gendered labour arrangements and the irresponsibility of most men with regard to our intrinsic vulnerabilities and interdependencies. In this respect, Jane Lewis and Gertrude Astrom report that 'attitude surveys show that all Swedish men between the ages of twenty-one and sixty at least feel that they *should* participate in unpaid [care] work.' (1997: 163-164)

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[80] One assumes from the larger context of Bowden's discussion that the reference is here to female and male participants.

Thus, we can propose that the above notion of 'life politics', as particularly informed by feminist perspectives of caring, poses a further challenge to the churches' understanding and contribution to 'soft culture'. For the churches, it firstly implies that the discourse and practice of 'soft culture' is not something to be perceived as distinct from this world, as something 'soft' and exotic that is peculiar only to certain domains or spheres and to certain people. It can be said that the imperative to bear witness to their faith through word and deed, has always been central, in one way or another, to the message and self-understanding of the churches. But this, generally speaking, has rather been understood as something a-political and separate from the question of structures and institutionalisation, political, economic and social.

As opposed to this self-understanding, the notion of 'life politics' challenges the churches and their members to a new understanding of their faith, a *politisation* thereof according to different social movement values not merely conceptualised and practised from within their own circle, but outside their direct domain - amongst and with other actors, social movements, etc. It thus challenges the churches and their members to new forms of struggle and solidarity, *in* this world and *with* others not necessarily belonging to their own circle. In close connection to the discussion in the previous subsection, it challenges the faith of the churches to go public, to speak a language and engage in practices which, in terms of their own language and practices, converge with the 'worldly' language and practices of a new 'life politics' and 'soft culture'. Consequently, it is a language and practice in which both the churches and other actors of a life politics should find many common denominators: compassion, care, tolerance, respect (for others), modesty, solidarity, etc.

Secondly, it is especially Bowden's feminist perspective that further challenges the churches' understanding of a 'life politics' and 'soft culture'. It must be confirmed that the adoption of a public identity, is not enough, as one of the most crucial inner transformations that still ought to take place in a largely male-biased and male-dominating church sector, is with regard to *the place of women in the churches* and their contribution to transforming theology. Yet, having said this, perhaps one of the silent but most meaningful revolutions within the churches over recent decades could be regarded a new confirmation of women and *feminist theology* in the churches[81].

[81] Cf. here Richard Falk's appreciation of feminist religion on p. 221 (first paragraph).

This confirmation constitutes an emerging revolution in the churches that can certainly be considered to have made an important contribution to the feminist movement. And, in this new theological and ecclesiastical voice (collectively speaking) the language of 'soft culture' may also be heard.

In a book by Third World women from Africa, Asia and Latin America, we may for instance note how Ana Maria Tepedino had written about "Feminist Theology as the Fruit of *Passion* and *Compassion*" (italics added). In this essay, Tepedino wrote about women's struggle "against male-chauvinist ideology, which dehumanizes *both* men and women". Thus, she determined that the struggle had to be a collective endeavour by women *and* men, and that women theologians invited their male theological colleagues to join them in the struggle to *together* give birth to a new theology. Moreover, the starting-point for feminist theology ought to go "*beyond* the experience of oppression, the experience of God, and the struggle for justice" (italics added) to the practice of *tenderness*. According to Tepedino, such dynamics needs to be all-embracing in terms of humanity as a whole, by seeking to create brotherly and sisterly relationships not simply between men and women, but also among the elderly, adolescents, and children.

In a further, concrete sense, Tepedino determined that women in the ecclesial base communities had shown the way to the practice of such tenderness through the many *life*-giving initiatives in which they are involved and have taken the lead: the various movements for health, day-care centers, and schools; the community movements for land reform; the volunteers crews to construct housing; ecology projects; the movement to create an alternative to contemporary wasteful, consumerist, individualistic and hedonistic society (1989: 166).

In addition, the word *passion* emphasised in Tepedino's above-mentioned essay title, should attract our attention as a term that further informs the meaning of 'soft culture'. Used as a twin concept with 'compassion', passion, from Tepedino's writing, appears to denote the emotive aspect of women's practice of tenderness mentioned above. For Tepedino, women do theology with passion, by passionately and wholeheartedly engaging themselves, by striving to fill their ideas with lived experience. As expressed in the following definition, they allow themselves to become totally possessed and unabated in their struggle for new meaningful life:

> Passion, allowing oneself to be possessed, is the essence of the mystical experience and of the erotic experience as well, involving every fiber of one's being at one peak moment, which explodes with energy and vitality for carrying on the struggle. (1989: 168)

While we could find in Tepedino's perspective an important indicator for the churches contribution to 'soft culture', for transforming the *churches* and *theology* through a feminist input, there would, however, be scope still for a further movement along the line of 'resistance identities' to 'project identities' that we are aspiring to in this study[82]. This is, for instance, illustrated by the above definition of Tepedino in which the notions of "passion" and "erotic experience" are (only explicitly) related to the notion of "struggle". Certainly, this cannot be the full story about human purpose and fulfillment. For the churches in particular, it means that neither a mere 'struggle' paradigm (even if this is filled with a more proactive contents), nor a world denouncing Puritanism will do. It holds that a great challenge for the churches remains the development of a new '*theology of joy*', as creative supplement to their worldly 'theologies of struggle'.

It must be concluded that 'soft culture' does not *per se* stand juxtaposed to the notions of pleasure, joy and passion (the latter not in the above sense of 'struggle' but in the sense of denoting sensuality), but affirms it rather. Here we may relate to Jürgen Moltmann, the distinguished German theologian, who once asked in an earlier work on theology and joy whether it can be regarded right to laugh, to play and to dance in a world of so much suffering; whether the cultural revival of play, festivities and enjoyment in the affluent West is not forced and downright unnatural as long as there are so many hells on earth. "How can we laugh and rejoice when there are still so many tears to be wiped away and when new tears are being added every day?"

On the above questions Moltmann gave a positive answer: *creative play and enjoyment anticipate and constitute the true liberation and freedom of humanity.* But this does not mean a neglect of suffering and injustice in the present world, as Moltmann addressed himself to "those who are mourning and suffering with others, who are protesting and feeling oppressed by the excess of evil in their society". What

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[82] This adherence to the notion of 'project identities' has been repeatedly stated in 7.3.1. See also the end of chapter six.

really matters, is for humanity to learn "to distinguish between the alienated forms of merely apparent good fortune and the liberating forms of enjoyment" (1973: 27-28).

Thus, for Moltmann the art of creative play and enjoyment prepares and anticipates the liberated, future society (see 1973: 36-37). In a final chapter, he proposed this as a special challenge for Christians and Christian congregations, to "experiment with the possibilities of creative freedom", to become "testing grounds of the realm of freedom right in the realm of necessity" (1973: 85). In the context of what Moltmann wrote earlier, a kind of freedom is implied that stands opposed to much of the Christian tradition's unconditional denouncement of pleasure and the abolishment of the "games of freedom": the Puritans, the Neo-Puritans, the Reformation, the larger Protestant tradition (1973: 34-35).

But as Moltmann further commented, not only Christians have disregarded the culture of pleasure. This, as much, had been achieved by their secular counterparts of the socialist revolutions. As Moltmann ironically observed, "(i)n Prague the 1948 revolution closed down 2,000 coffeehouses, restaurants and beer gardens, the very ones in which the revolution itself had once been debated and plotted..." (1973: 35).

Of course, it must be said some 25 years after Moltmann wrote such comments, that the question today is rather about an alternative to the hard culture of contemporary global capitalism (which have almost completely denounced and replaced socialism and religious asceticism). On ethical, existential and religious grounds, the answer does not lie in a return to either of the latter. For Moltmann, the answer rather lay in wresting control of the alienated games of society from the ruling interests and to change them into games of freedom (ibid). In the same sense, and with this perspective we finally conclude, Peter Waterman in his reflection on alternatives to global capitalism, under a project of "Global Solidarity Culture", suggested that there may be a thin line separating an alternative society and culture from capitalist society and culture. According to him, the answer would lie rather in processes of *selective rejections* and *rearticulations* by means of the many different voices participating in a common project of solidarity and transformation:

> The identification here of global problems rather than universal enemies requires us to formulate and develop viable, convincing, attractive, and "enjoyable" global solutions. The word *enjoyable* is crucial here. Insofar as we recognize how state-nationalism and

> globalized capital capitalize (literally and figuratively) on enjoyment, those seeking to surpass capitalism must shrug off their fear of hatred of pleasure, sensuality, lust and individual consumption...The notion of a worldwide Maoist Cultural Revolution will attract few - especially among people who have been already subjected to such puritanical authoritarianism and its accompanying hypocrisies... If we reject revolutionary historical schemas, then we can extend globally the notion Calderon (1987) has applied to Latin America, of living in "mixed times." Such a notion undermines the binary oppositions of Traditional-Modern and Modern-Postmodern, reminding us that we live in a historical world, not just a sociological or linguistic universe. Realistic global utopias will then represent nor negations of either "premodernity" or "modernity", but selective rejections and rearticulations - implying the necessary contribution also of those living under, rediscovering, or valuing precapitalistic civilizations and cultures. (1996: 49-50)

7.4 Conclusion

> Development, education, communication and humanization are all part of the same process. Process means progression, creation, moving upwards and towards what is both desirable and 'better' (more human)... The word 'development' should then be reserved for what it was coined for in the first place: to indicate growth, yes, but also and above all to invoke creation, culture, education, ownership and control, the satisfaction of fundamental human needs and everything involving autonomous human agency. (Raff Carmen 1996: 209)

The above quote from Raff Carmen's book, *Autonomous Development. Humanizing the Landscape: An Excursion into Radical Thinking and Practice*, fittingly concludes our perspective on the churches and the contemporary development debate in this study. Indeed, we may perceive the four beacons of complementary third and fourth generation strategic development action identified in this chapter to reflect Carmen's conclusion of a broader and richer concept of development, one that also incorporates social scientific and ethical concepts and discourses that traditionally *do not belong to the explicit and overt language of development*.

For the churches (and other religious institutions), perhaps more than any other actor of development, such a broader, richer and at times less traditional concept of development would seem to be far more appropriate to their (i.e. the churches') nature as 'idea' and 'value' institutions and (presumed) orientation to *holistic* human well-being. In accordance with the perspective on complementary third and fourth generation strategic development action that has been explored in this study, they are

challenged to invest to a far lesser degree in 'development' activities of a first and second generation nature - activities that are the less sophisticated expressions of strategic development involvement in the traditional sense of the word. As actors that (presumably) want to make a durable contribution, they are challenged to adapt and reorientate themselves to the third and fourth generation strategic development orientations, which may first of all relate to innovative interventions in the traditional economic and political (public) areas of development.

Yet, the concept of fourth generation development strategies - an understanding of strategic development action which we predominantly adhered to in this study - challenges the churches to focus especially on their (anticipated) contribution to the now emerging broader, richer and less traditional understandings/discourses of development in normative development and social sciences debates. These are new understandings/discourses of development that do not neglect the more traditional areas of development. However, they broaden the scope of development and move on to aspects that can be regarded as vital to greater social well-being, to transforming the lives of the poor and addressing oppression in its fullest sense, and to the creation of a society (globally speaking) that truly progresses on the path of greater *humanisation* (following Carmen). In this sense, they are understandings/discourses that seek to transform the traditional areas of development *as well as* to go beyond those areas to emphasise *other* dimensions or aspects of human and social life.

On the part of the churches, the new emerging fourth generation strategic development orientation - which is infinitely broader and richer on a conceptual, relational and ethical level in comparison with traditional development thinking and praxis - challenges them to a fundamental introspection. It challenges them to new levels of normative social-scientific discourse and specialisation. Above all, it challenges them *to reconsider what their real strengths and purpose are in achieving development, or more preferably said, in achieving a new just and humane society.* In that sense, it challenges them to *excel as 'idea' and 'value' institutions* in a renewed, more informed and concrete way - 'idea' and 'value' institutions that are not *merely* concerned in preserving or protecting their own peculiar identity in the process, but that engage in new relationships of solidarity and coalition with the contemporary

movements of the poor and civil society with which they have (or ought to have) much in common.

In conclusion, we have in this chapter (re)confirmed the prevailing relevance of the ecumenical development debate[83]. This, certainly, is a debate or discourse representing an intellectual road that has *not* been travelled by the majority in the churches. It is a debate or discourse that must be sharply distinguished from the so-called evangelical development thinking, which is dominant in the churches today and which, on the basis of underlying ideological and structural constraints, *cannot* take the churches beyond the first and second generation orientations[84]. At the same time, the ecumenical development debate or discourse and the churches adhering to that debate or discourse, need to find new impetus in the modes of complementary third and fourth generation discourse and action that we have identified in this chapter. The ecumenical development debate and churches' adaptation to such modes will enable them to overcome the state of erosion and impasse in which they are currently finding themselves[85]. Through their engagement in such modes they may become significant actors contributing to true *human* development.

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[83] See 7.2.

[84] This can be argued on the basis of the exposition in chapter one, which remains very much applicable to contemporary evangelical thinking on development. See also footnote 19 on p. 216.

[85] See the reference in footnote 30 in this chapter.

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